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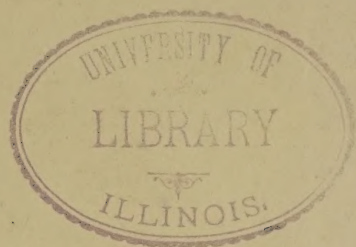
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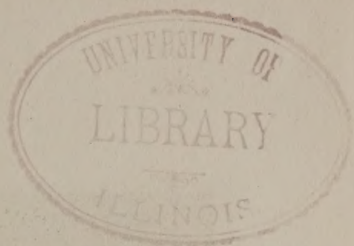
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THE
HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

FROM THE INVASION OF JULIUS CÆSAR TO THE END OF THE
REIGN OF GEORGE II.

BY HUME AND SMOLLETT.

WITH

THE CONTINUATION,

FROM THE ACCESSION OF GEORGE III.

TO THE

ACCESSION OF QUEEN VICTORIA.

BY THE REV. T. S. HUGHES, B.D.

LATE CANON OF PETERBOROUGH.

ALSO

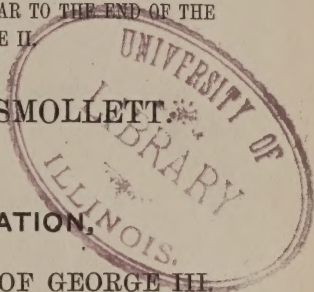
COPIOUS NOTES, THE AUTHOR'S LAST CORRECTIONS,
IMPROVEMENTS, AND ENLARGEMENT.

With Historical Illustrations, Autographs, and Portraits.

A NEW EDITION.


VOL. XVIII.

LONDON: GEORGE BELL, 186 FLEET STREET.
1855.



"Histories," says Lord Bacon, "make wise men:" and in proportion as their minds are influenced by a natural love of their country, so must they feel a desire to become familiar with the most authentic account of its origin, its progress towards civilization, and the circumstances leading to its present importance in the scale of nations.

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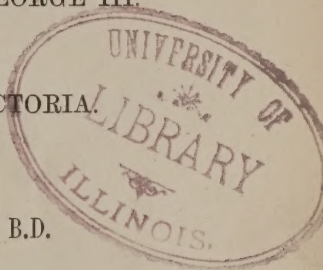
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FROM THE NORMAN CONQUEST

TO THE PRESENT TIME

BY HENRY TROTT, ESQ.

IN THREE VOLUMES

VOLUME THE FIRST

LONDON

PRINTED BY J. JOHNSON, ST. PAULS CHURCH-YARD

1794



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OF
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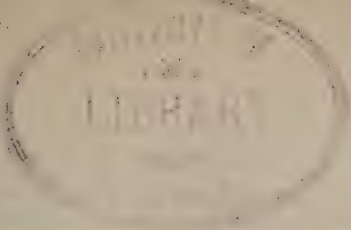
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THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

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THE whigs, already uneasy, because the session had passed away, and no approach had been made by ministers to a closer and more profitable union, now saw a new reign commencing,

and a new parliament about to be chosen, without any invitation given, or hope held out to them: indeed, it became evident that government was prepared to stand the chance of a general election without their assistance, being anxious to place itself in such a position as to be independent of their support: the time therefore had now arrived, when it became necessary for them to try their strength, if they hoped ever again to participate in the sweets of office. The proclamation of the new king having taken place on the twenty-eighth, his majesty, next day, sent down his first message to parliament; when an address, in answer to that part of the message which related to the death of the late monarch, was immediately moved by the duke of Wellington in the upper, and by sir Robert Peel in the lower house, seconded respectively by lord Grey and Mr. Brougham; who recorded, in terms of affectionate gratitude, the exertions, by which his late majesty had, under circumstances of unexampled difficulty, maintained the external reputation and internal prosperity of these realms.

On the following day, however, motions were made for a second address, in answer to that part of the message which recommended a dissolution of parliament, as soon as means had been provided for carrying on the public service: the whigs then raised an opposition, under the plea that it was right to take into consideration the possible contingency of a demise of the crown; in which case, as the presumptive heir was a minor, it might be necessary to appoint a regency during the non-existence of parliament, unless it were determined to leave the country without a government: the only inconvenience that could occur, was that of their sitting a month longer; and why should they not sit, when so imperative a duty required it? The reasoning was plausible; but ministers answered, that the very importance of this question, and the difficulties which would undoubtedly rise in the course of it, as well as the caution which ought to be observed, were the strongest possible reasons against hurry at the end of a session, when the members of one house would be thinking more about the next election than present business: besides, there was no pressing necessity, no prospect of danger from the king's health; on the contrary, lord Grey himself had affirmed, that his majesty's strong constitution and temperate habits gave promise of a long reign. Whilst inconvenience then was positive and present, danger was but imaginary and remote: it was in vain to say, that the object was to gain twenty-four

hours' time for deliberation : yet even if that really were the case, the country would not so consider it : 'if the motion be agreed to,' said the duke of Wellington, 'it will be viewed as a complete defeat of ministers.'

His grace, who fully comprehended the views of the discontented party, found, in the ensuing discussion, that this was not the only opposition he had to expect : lords Harrowby, Winchelsea, and Eldon, the duke of Richmond, the marquis of Londondery, earl Mansfield, and lord Wharncliffe, one after another, stated their determination to vote for the amendment ; nay, even lord Goderich himself expressed similar sentiments. Ministers and their friends railed against what they called 'an unnatural coalition between parties most opposite to each other in principle ;' while lord Ellenborough called on earl Grey to remember the confidence which he had expressed in the present administration, and the large debt of gratitude he had acknowledged as due to it, for 'the great measure of last session :' an unfortunate topic ; since every allusion to it, by way of conciliating the whigs, called up afresh to the minds of the more influential tories those motives which had arrayed them against the government. 'Any attempt,' said his lordship, 'to overturn the administration came with a peculiarly bad grace from that noble earl and his adherents.'—'I rejoice, however,' he continued, 'that we know, at last, who are our real opponents, and who our friends ; even though I see, most unexpectedly, the noble earl in the array against us.'

Lord Mansfield, while he repudiated the idea of coalition, declared, that the peculiar circumstances of last year ; the deep interest which, in common with other peers, he took in the measure then carried ; and the indignation which he felt, in common with them, on account of that measure,—had, during the present session, fastened the bonds which united him by a political feeling with many noble lords : they might have acted together, and there might have been a coincidence of opinion among some who formerly did not agree on many subjects ; but there was no coalition : that which united them was a want of confidence in his majesty's government ; a determination not to support his ministers ; and a desire to bring forward such measures as might benefit the public : 'the present government,' said the duke of Richmond, 'is a government of mere expediency, full of vacillating proposals, never daring to propose and support measures on their own proper grounds.'

Earl Grey, in reply to the complaints of lord Ellenborough,

assured the house, 'that he had never felt or expressed confidence in ministers: they had done well in carrying the catholic bill; they had received all his political and personal support; and that support, he could not but feel, was of some benefit to the cause: but he claimed no gratitude for what he had done; and, on the other hand, he owed none. As to general confidence, it was an idea which had never entered into his mind: his public declarations must be known to many of their lordships; and he was certain that in private he had often made the same statement: he had repeatedly expressed his opinion of the incapacity and vacillating policy of the present cabinet: how then could he have confidence in them or their measures?' On a division, ministers had a majority of 100 against 56; but the debate itself was a declaration of war; and it became evident, that their scheme of government, by balancing and trimming measures, so as to secure the aid of one section which trusted them not, against another, was now at an end.

In the lower house, the number of speakers was smaller, but the language was still more bitter; and sir Robert Peel had the mortification of receiving a lecture on the subject of consistency from Mr. Huskisson, and of being classed by Mr. Brougham among 'the flatterers and fawning parasites of the duke of Wellington.' Ministers carried the address by a majority of only forty-six; the votes for lord Althorp's amendment being 139, and against it 185.

On Saturday, July the third, king William held his first court at St. James's; when a large number of public functionaries, foreign ministers, and nobility attended to pay their respects to the new sovereign: next day, being Sunday, he attended divine service at the Chapel Royal, and received the sacrament; at the conclusion of which ceremony, his majesty received the archbishops and bishops in the royal closet, where he professed to them 'his unalterable attachment to the protestant religion, and his determined resolution to support the established church of England:' after this, he met the judges in the great council chamber, and graciously complimented them on their upright administration of law and justice.

The funeral of the late king took place on the fifteenth of July at Windsor, with great pomp: on the sixteenth, his successor went over the whole establishment of the castle; and after accosting the domestics with great affability, gave orders

for its future management: on the same day, the dean and chapter of Windsor attended with an address of condolence and congratulation; and early next morning, the king set off for St. James's palace, to receive an address from the city of London. Many successive days were occupied by his majesty in reviewing the different regiments of guards, receiving loyal addresses, particularly from the universities, and conferring honors on several deserving individuals; while his activity astonished all who were not acquainted with his previous habits: nor did the condescension of the king and his royal consort toward every class of their subjects, together with numerous instances of their kind feeling and prompt liberality, fail to excite that spirit of loyalty, which, though it may for a time lie dormant, never ceases to dwell in British hearts, the best safeguard of the throne and constitution. Several important bills were frustrated by the want of time to carry them through both houses; among which was one upon the subject of forgery; another for the introduction of trial by jury into the Scotch courts of session; and a third for the disfranchisement of East Retford. On Friday, the twenty-third of July, his majesty went in state to the house of lords, where the commons, with their speaker, were assembled: after a most gracious speech, he prorogued parliament, which was next day dissolved by proclamation; writs being ordered for the election of a new one, returnable on the fourteenth of September.

The progress of the session just closed had broken up the alliance which enabled ministers to maintain themselves in office; and as this alliance, whilst it lasted, served to widen the breach between them and their ancient friends, they were destined in the ensuing elections to meet with a fierce and combined opposition. The duke of Wellington's administration could not be consistently accused by the whigs either of illiberality or extravagance; indeed, it had received their approbation as an honest, well-meaning government, until they discovered, toward the end of the session, that its good intentions did not go so far as to call them to share in the distribution of places: nor was it unnatural that they should feel resentment at this neglect; for so long a period had elapsed since they were debarred from office, that public sentiment began to take a turn in their favor throughout the country: nay, there were found some, even among their opponents, who thought it fair that they should have a trial; being averse to see one of the great parties in the state con-

demned to political annihilation: taking advantage of these feelings, and of the divisions already alluded to, the whigs very adroitly paved the way to a resumption of power. While the ministry was vehemently attacked on the score of incapacity, its leader was characterized as a domineering soldier, unfitted to conduct alone the government of a nation: yet determined to surround himself with men of mean capacity and dependent spirit, who would act as the unreflecting instruments of his will. 'The duke of Wellington,' they asserted, 'illustrious as his services have been, must not suppose that the people of England will submit to him as their ruler, if the only condition on which he will consent to trample on them is the retention of such colleagues as lord Aberdeen to manage our relations with the Polignacs and Metternichs, lord Ellenborough to dispose of India, and lord Lyndhurst to show how much worse the court of chancery can be conducted than by lord Eldon: his grace might be a useful and popular member of any government; but he must be content to employ significant figures, and not, by a vain effort of giving value to a row of ciphers, expose himself to the derision of the nation. The notion of the duke, it was said, being able to govern the country as sole minister, arose from the disunion of some parties, now no more; the want of decision in some individuals, now little regarded; the aversion to office in others, now likely to be overcome; but above all, from what was held necessary in the late king's time—a firm man to control him. A sovereign, who had no childish fancies to gratify; who did not one day want to get rid of his wife at the risk of a civil war, and another day to build palaces at the cost of a million; who had no minions to influence him, and no personal spites to gratify;—would never have required an unyielding minister to keep him in order; and the necessity of his grace, as premier, would never have been felt. With the duke's political failures abroad, and the deplorable state of his parliamentary campaign at home, much of this supposed necessity, even during the late king's life, had disappeared; but the demise of the crown had put an end to the whole delusion, and restored to the country the chance of a respectable administration; presenting, as it did, to the duke of Wellington, the fair choice of ceasing to govern at all, or of being content to govern with colleagues fit for the service of the state.'¹ Such were the sentiments studiously put forth by pamphleteers; and though the many

¹ See Annual Register for 1830, p. 143.

offended tories did not deliberately act in union with the whigs, yet their influence took the same direction, to eject a ministry, by which they considered themselves deceived and betrayed.

The spirit of opposition, thus excited, suddenly gained a great addition of strength by events, of which the continent became the scene. Scarcely had parliament been dissolved, when the French government was overturned by a revolution as unexpected, as were the measures which directly led to it. Its ministers, finding that the new elections only increased the number of their opponents in the legislative body, suddenly broke through the fences of the constitution, with a determination to establish a species of Prussian government, in which the material interests of the people should predominate over those that are intellectual and political: by a mere royal ordinance, they abolished the liberty of the press, cancelled the existing system of representation, and fashioned for the kingdom a new system of election, capable of producing a chamber of deputies more obedient to the royal will. Paris rose against these unconstitutional decrees; and armed troops were opposed to an armed rabble: misconduct, and want of faith in the former, left victory in the hands of the latter: the troops of the line refused to act; the guards, after two days of fruitless resistance in the streets, were forced to retire from the capital; and those members of the chamber of deputies, who were then in Paris, assumed the government. Amid the acclamations of a triumphant populace, they cut off, by their own decree, one-third part of the chamber of peers; they excluded Charles X., with all his descendants, from the throne, as a violator of the charter, they transferred the crown to the duke of Orleans, with full powers of royalty; while they endeavored to beguile the multitude by a verbal innovation in his title, which was changed from 'king of France,' to 'king of the French.' Other attempts were made to carry out Lafayette's political paradox of a 'monarchy founded on a republican basis:' but Louis Philippe was too wise not to know that his throne, if it stood at all, must stand on monarchical institutions; and it has been his constant aim gently, and almost imperceptibly, to acquire for it that only safe support. The rapidity of these events in France, and the complete triumph of insurgents over the resources of an established government, infected all quarters of Europe. In a short time, the inhabitants of Brussels were in open insurrection against local taxes: having met with success, they extended their views to the overthrow of their

government, and a separation of the Netherlands from Holland : they repulsed the king's troops in an attack on the capital ; established a provisional government ; convoked a national congress ; and, declaring Belgium an independent state, excluded the house of Orange from the throne. About the beginning of October the hereditary prince, as lieutenant-general of the Flemish provinces, removed the seat of government to Antwerp ; whence he issued a proclamation, announcing that the separation of Belgium from Holland was acknowledged, and that he should take on himself the sovereignty of the former : but to this declaration no respect was paid ; the king of the Netherlands was so displeased, that he revoked his son's commission ; and the people busied themselves about the choice of a new monarch. Throughout Europe at this time the notion seemed to be, that a populace had only to rise, in order to make armies and governments vanish before it. In Britain, these events were hailed by the whigs with applause, as the dawning of a new and glorious day in the history of man : public meetings were held, to pass resolutions, commending the spirit with which the Parisians had shaken off encroaching despotism ; deputations were sent to congratulate them on their triumph ; and subscriptions proposed, to relieve the families of those who had suffered in the contest : the people were specially called on to remark, how little they had to fear from military power, since the citizens of Paris and Brussels had been able to set it at defiance ; and how clearly they were intitled to be heard in the government, since it was so easy for them to make the government what they chose. The French ministry, besides, had contrived to put itself completely in the wrong : no moderate man could justify the despotic acts by which it had destroyed the constitution of the country, or blame the resistance which those acts had called forth : resistance, too, had been confined to its immediate object much more successfully than could have been expected, where an armed populace possessed all the power ; for except during the actual fighting in the streets of Paris, no blood had been shed ; no property had been violated : the head of the government indeed had been changed, but its monarchical form had been preserved, with a new intermixture of popular elements ; while the deposed monarch, with several members of his family, and his suite, was permitted to embark quietly at a French port, in order to seek an asylum in Great Britain.

The excitement produced by these events had an effect on our elections very unfavorable to ministers ; nor did this fail

to bring forward the question of parliamentary reform in a more prominent and remarkable shape than it had yet assumed : the force of example now added itself to all other existing motives for change ; and the notion of transferring the privileges of a corrupt borough to an unrepresented place, or giving the elective franchise to a populous town, was utterly discarded : in the present state of public feeling, there was no difficulty in getting up meetings, petitions, and addresses, advocating extensive alterations in our representative system ; all of which, however vague and indeterminate in their respective conditions, tended to confer the elective rights on a much larger proportion of the people than had hitherto enjoyed them ; nor were threats spared, that a refusal of these rights would lead to a general convulsion, in which the privileged orders might possibly be forced to yield much more than was now required. The alarm occasioned by such demands, and their accompanying menaces, was inexpressibly augmented by disturbances, which, beginning in the county of Kent, spread themselves rapidly over the whole face of the country : the rioters did not at first assume the character of disorderly mobs, but appeared as lurking incendiaries, wreaking their vengeance on property ; the destruction of which could only aggravate the causes of distress : night after night they lighted up conflagrations, by which an incredible quantity of grain, and even of live stock, was consumed : bands, still more daring, attacked machinery of all kinds, particularly thrashing-machines, the use of which became so unpopular, that after a short time insurance offices refused a policy to those who kept them on their premises. The first offenders that were seized, being tried before county magistrates, met with that lenity which commiseration for their starving condition excited ; but the evil spread in consequence so extensively, that all protection for property seemed to be at an end : bands of rioters pillaged and destroyed it during the day ; and when night fell, simultaneous conflagrations, blazing up in different quarters, spread havoc and dismay far and wide over the land : at length, the military force in the most disturbed districts was increased ; a reward of £500 was offered for the conviction of an incendiary ; and a special commission was ordered to proceed into those counties where the worst outrages were committed : it may be remarked, however, that they were speedily and effectually suppressed in some places, where the yeomanry and farmers, mounting their horses and scouring the country, aided the civil officers in the discovery and apprehension of offenders.

Under such gloomy circumstances, the new parliament met on the twenty-sixth of October, and found parties in the same state as at the dissolution; with this difference only, that every element of opposition against the administration had acquired fresh vigor by the course of events, while new topics had sprung up, on which it would be forced to make a trial of strength: it appeared certain, that the question of reform would speedily be brought forward; and ministers may perhaps have flattered themselves, that its discussion would effect a reconciliation between them and their former adherents. On the second of November, after the several members of both houses had been sworn in, and Mr. Manners Sutton unanimously re-elected speaker of the commons, the session was opened, with great splendor, by the king in person. His majesty, in his speech, alluded to the events of deep interest and importance which had occurred on the continent; to the continuance of his diplomatic relations with the new French dynasty; to the endeavors which, in concert with his allies, he was making to restore tranquillity in the Netherlands; to the maintenance of those general treaties by which the political system of Europe had been established; and to the hope of renewing his diplomatic relations with Portugal, because the government of that country had determined to perform a great act of justice and humanity, by the grant of a general amnesty! In addressing the house of commons, he observed, that estimates for the ensuing year would be prepared with that strict regard to economy which he was determined to enforce in every branch of public expenditure; and as, by the demise of the late king, the civil list had expired, his majesty placed, without reserve, at their disposal, his interest in the hereditary revenues, and in those funds which might be derived from the droits of the admiralty, from the West India duties, or any casual source; rejoicing in the opportunity of thus evincing his intire reliance on their dutiful attachment; and his confidence that they would cheerfully provide for the support of government, and dignity of the crown: after lamenting the disturbances which afflicted the country, and expressing a determination to employ all means which the laws and constitution had placed in his hands to repress them, he consoled himself with reflecting on the loyalty and affectionate attachment of the great body of his people; declaring, that it was the main object of his life to preserve them those blessings which they had so long enjoyed, and transmit them unimpaired to posterity.

Usual addresses were carried in both houses, though not

without evident signs of vigorous opposition to ministers on the subjects of reform and retrenchment. In regard to the latter object, every assurance was given by government, that reduction of expenditure and taxation should be carried as far as propriety and practicability would permit: on the other point, however, the duke of Wellington went beyond his usual prudence and reserve, in the peculiar state of public feeling: for at a time, when the people of England, bending beneath burdens almost intolerable, were recalling to mind the profligacy of statesmen, the subserviency of parliaments, and the corruption of institutions, recorded in our annals from the revolution up to the present time, and were ascribing these evils to the imperfect state of our representation, which had converted stocks and stones into constituencies, though populous towns remained unrepresented, and had enabled the proprietors of boroughs to make their own terms with ministers;—while such sentiments were at their height, his grace uttered his memorable denunciation against reform; and his deposition, as minister of this country, was irrevocably fixed. In replying to earl Grey, who had alluded to the subject, and candidly confessed that he had no definite plan to produce; the premier observed,—‘that, on his part, he would go farther; and would say, that he had never read or heard of any measure, up to the present moment, which could improve our representation, or render it more satisfactory to the country at large: he would not hesitate unequivocally to declare his opinion, that we possessed a legislature, which answered all good purposes, better than any which had been ever tried; and that if he had to frame a legislature for another country, his aim would be to form one which would produce similar results: under such circumstances, he was not only unprepared to bring forward a measure of reform, but ready at once to declare, that so long as he held a station in the government, he should feel it his duty to resist any such when proposed by others.’

In the house of commons, Mr. Brougham did not wait even till the address was moved, before he gave notice, that on the sixteenth, he would submit a distinct proposition for a change in our representation; intending to take his stand on the ancient ground of the constitution, as it existed originally, in the days of its purity and vigor. Sir Robert Peel, though he did not speak in the same fearless, uncompromising tone as his chief, yet professed that he saw difficulties about the question which he was by no means prepared to encounter: he wished nevertheless to say nothing then which might at all prejudice dis-

cussion hereafter, or interference with its advance toward a satisfactory termination. These declarations were sufficient to spread widely the flame of discontent, which had been already kindled against government; and the consequences, both in and out of parliament, were formidable combinations to embarrass ministers, and thwart their measures. No little indignation was excited against them by the manner in which the king had been led, in his speech, to mention the revolution in Belgium, as 'a revolt against an enlightened government;' and to express his determination to maintain in regard to it those general treaties, by which the political system of Europe was said to be fixed. 'All this,' lord Grey observed, 'sounded like threatened interference; and he could not conceive why we should be bound by treaties to interfere between Holland and the Low Countries: neither had we a right to express an opinion on the conduct of the Belgians; to praise the government which they had cast off, and stigmatise them as revolted subjects.' Few countries, in fact, had been treated, at the new partition of Europe after the war, worse than Belgium; which had been joined to Holland for the convenience of others, who wished to raise a bulwark against the power of France: the junction was not attended with mutual affection, congeniality of habits, or even with a similarity of religion; and the Belgians considered themselves an oppressed people, not only because they had been forced into a connexion which they never would have sought, but because they found its terms and conditions unequal: they complained that the king, a Dutchman, and stadtholder of Holland long before he was sovereign of the Netherlands, sacrificed his acquired to his hereditary dominions; that to Dutchmen was given a monopoly of the general administration; that even from Belgian offices Belgians were excluded; that they were taxed for Dutch debts, and for objects exclusively Dutch; that their religion, and institutions for education connected with it, were discouraged; that their very language had been banished from their own law courts, and their country treated altogether like a conquered province. These accusations, though untrue to the extent represented by democratic journals and catholic priests, were not without foundation; and the part known to have been taken by the duke of Wellington in cementing this ill-assorted union, together with his inclination toward continental despots, disposed people to suspect him of a design to interfere, on the present occasion, in a manner adverse to the Belgians; so that, confessedly, at this period, the popularity of himself and his cabinet, was declining,

when a domestic circumstance occurred, which tended in no small degree to increase their embarrassment.

The king and queen had promised, some time before the meeting of parliament, to honor the lord mayor's feast at Guildhall with their presence : and great were the preparations made by the citizens on the approach of that civic festival : but whilst all were at the height of expectation, they were suddenly mortified by intelligence, that their chief magistrate had received a letter from sir Robert Peel, late on the evening of the seventh of November, stating that the king, following the advice of ministers, had resolved to put off his visit to a future opportunity : the reason given for this determination was, that information, recently received, 'gave cause for apprehension, lest, notwithstanding the devoted loyalty of the citizens of London, advantage might be taken of the nocturnal assemblage of multitudes, to create tumult and confusion ; and it would be a source of deep and lasting concern to their majesties, if any calamity were to occur on the occasion of their visit to the city.' This announcement filled the metropolis with doubt and alarm ; especially, as a disposition to mischief had been lately shown by the populace, directed principally against the duke and the new police : indeed, indications of hostile feeling had been so repeated and so strong, and inflammatory handbills had been so industriously circulated, that two members of the common council acknowledged they had warned his grace of the danger ; and alderman Key, lord mayor elect, had apprised him of an attack intended to be made on his person : these circumstances induced the noble premier and his colleagues to decline the dinner ; and as their absence would have been liable to a misconstruction little less serious than the danger to be apprehended from their presence, it was judged prudent to advise his majesty to relinquish his intention, in order to prevent tumult and bloodshed. As soon as this determination became known, consternation pervaded all ranks ; men believed that some atrocious conspiracy against the royal person had been discovered, or even that a revolution was at hand ; so that the public funds fell nearly three per cent., and mercantile confidence was greatly interrupted : instead of civic festivities, the city was now disturbed with the rumbling of artillery, and the march of soldiers ; the Tower ditch was filled with water, and other precautions taken, to put that fortress into a state of security ; extra guards were placed at the bank, and at the magazine in Hyde Park : while large bodies of troops were billeted in the metropolitan suburbs : scarcely however had

two days elapsed, when people were laughing at the trepidation into which they had been betrayed; confidence was restored; and the funds rose as rapidly as they had fallen.

Meanwhile severe animadversions were passed in parliament on the conduct of ministers, for preventing his majesty's visit to the city; and the duke of Richmond, who began a discussion on this subject in the upper house, declared, 'that the king reigned in the hearts of his people; and that he might have gone safely, unaccompanied by guards, through every street of the metropolis;'—an allegation to which the duke of Wellington readily assented, as did sir Robert Peel in the other house: but they contended, that, although the royal personage might have been safe, his presence would have brought together a large and lawless multitude, bent on riot and outrage; when troops must have been called in for the suppression of tumult. Mr. Brougham took this occasion to contrast severely the king's popularity with the hostility exhibited toward his minister: in regard to the latter, he observed;—'I regret much its appearance: I regret it on account of the mischief which it is calculated to do in the mercantile world; I regret it also on account of its apparent connexion with that speech from the throne, which has been followed up by a still more fatal declaration against every species of reform;—a declaration to which, in my conscience, I believe the noble duke owes nine-tenths of his present unpopularity. I wish I had not lived to see the day, when the brilliant and imperishable renown of his grace, as a general and a conqueror, was coupled with a deviation from his proper sphere into the labyrinth of politics, and an attempt to shine as a great statesman: I wish I had not lived to see the day, when forgetfulness of the people to the merits of the soldier, and forgetfulness of the soldier to his own sphere of greatness, showed to Europe and to the world, that he could not accompany his majesty on a journey into the heart of an attached and loyal population.'

It was now obvious that the duke's administration, which no longer moved in harmony with the predominating spirit of the nation, had received a shock which would prevent its long duration. On Monday, the fifteenth of November, when the chancellor of the exchequer stated to the house his arrangements for the civil list, which, in consequence of a previous estimate, he proposed to raise to the annual sum of £970,000, sir Henry Parnell moved, 'that a select committee be appointed to inquire into its various items, and to make their report.' The debate was brief: Messrs. Calcraft and Herries, both

members of government, declared that it was an unusual thing to submit the civil list to a committee, and that retrenchment and simplification had been carried as far as was practicable or prudent: but the motion was supported by Mr. Banks, lord Althorp, Mr. Wynne, and Mr. Holme Sumner; three of which number, in other times, would hardly have lent their votes to unseat a tory administration; and on a division, ministers were defeated by a majority of 233, co-operating, though not expressly confederated, whigs and extreme tories, against a minority of 204. Next day the duke of Wellington in the upper, and sir Robert Peel in the lower house, announced that, in consequence of the preceding decision, they had tendered to his majesty their resignations, and continued to hold office only until successors should be appointed: it was afterwards declared, that they came to this resolution, not so much on account of the late vote on the civil list, as from anticipation of the result of a division on Mr. Brougham's proposition for parliamentary reform, which stood for the very day on which this announcement was made: but even if the civil list question had not been deemed important enough to justify a resignation, the majority that decided it showed a settled and stern system of opposition, which must have convinced ministers that their reign was over. Mr. Brougham, at the request of his associates, postponed his motion for reform till the twenty-fifth of November, professing to do so with great reluctance; since he appeared to reckon on remaining in his present position, and expressly affirmed, that 'he could not possibly be affected by any change in administration:' accordingly, he pledged himself to bring forward his motion on the day appointed, 'whoever might be his majesty's ministers:' next day, he repeated this declaration, on a motion made by sir M. W. Ridley, to postpone the consideration of election petitions till after Christmas; expressing astonishment at the reasons assigned for it—that ministers would not be present. 'The house,' he observed, 'could do many things without their assistance; and with every feeling of respect for the future ministers, generally speaking, he could have nothing to do with their administration.' The motion was negatived; and two days afterwards, Mr. Brougham was gazetted as lord high chancellor of Great Britain, with a peerage.

The high tories, though they had lent their votes to displace the ministry, had formed no plan, and taken no steps, to ensure to themselves any share in the succession; accordingly, earl Grey, being appointed first lord of the treasury, was commissioned to fill up the ranks of government; which duty he

undertook, on the express permission of his majesty, that parliamentary reform should be brought forward as a cabinet measure. In the course of a week, the new ministry was established; not consisting solely of whigs, but containing an admixture of those who had been adherents of Messrs. Canning and Huskisson, and who had formerly held office with the leading members of the displaced administration: the only difficulty lay with Mr. Brougham, who had so recently declared that no change could possibly affect him; by which he evidently meant, no change that did not offer to his acceptance a station sufficiently high: the minister was afraid to leave him neglected or discontented in the lower house, and the honorable gentleman was resolved not to sacrifice his interest there for any subordinate office; so that at length the highest judicial dignity in the empire was wrested out of the premier's hands by a skilful politician, of splendid talents indeed, but notoriously deficient in those particular qualifications which his official duties required. Few were found to pity the fate of the renegade sir James Scarlett, neglected now by the party whom he had so lately deserted; though many thought, the Irish chancellor, sir Antony Hart, who had stood impartially between contending parties, harshly treated in being made to resign for lord Plunkett: the premier, however, considered it necessary to have an Irish chancellor whom he could fully trust and employ in Irish politics. The duke of Richmond, the only leading member of the old tory party who entered the new cabinet, became postmaster-general: to lord Althorp it was assigned to lead the house of commons as chancellor of the exchequer; while the offices of home, foreign, and colonial secretaries, were given respectively to lords Melbourne, Palmerston, and Goderich: sir James Graham was made first lord of the admiralty; lord Lansdowne, president of the council; and lord Durham, privy seal; Messrs. Denman and Horne, attorney and solicitor-general; lord Hill, commander-in-chief; lord Auckland, president of the board of trade, and Mr. C. Grant, of the board of control: lord Holland became chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster; the duke of Devonshire, lord chamberlain; and the honorable Agar Ellis, chief commissioner of woods and forests: Mr. R. Grant was made judge advocate; lord John Russell, paymaster of the forces; Mr. Poulett Thompson, vice-president of the board of trade, and treasurer of the navy; sir Edward Paget and sir Robert Spencer, master and surveyor-general of the ordnance; Mr. C. W. Wynne, secretary at war; while Mr. Edward Ellice and

Mr. Spring Rice were appointed joint secretaries of the treasury: lord Carlisle had a seat in the cabinet without office. The only offices in Scotland liable to change being those of the lord advocate and solicitor-general, were given, the first to Mr. Jeffrey, the latter to Mr. Cockburn; long-trying friends and literary coadjutors of the new lord chancellor. Ireland received, as its chief governor, the marquis of Anglesey; with Mr. Stanley, as secretary; lord Plunkett, chancellor; and Mr. Pennefather, attorney-general.

The elevation of this ministry, the expectations it excited, as well as the peculiar difficulties and dangers by which it was threatened, were so well stated, at the time, by one of our leading journals,² that no apology can be requisite for introducing a few of its remarks into these pages. 'The exigency to which the new ministry owe their admission to power,' says the writer, 'is not one produced by court intrigue, or by mere party triumph: it is founded on that opinion, which caused the overthrow of a government hostile to reform; not zealous enough for retrenchment; and supposed to be, though perhaps unjustly, not quite impartial between the interests of freedom and prerogative, in the concerns of foreign nations. As by the tide of opinion, then, they floated into office, on it they must continue to buoy themselves, or they will inevitably perish.'—'The composition of the Grey ministry is possibly as good as the present state of parties will admit of; confining the selection to public men who are likely to agree on most political questions, and especially on the enforcement of those great principles, which constitute the rallying points for all reflecting and disinterested minds, in the actual crisis of the world.'—'Wants which have more than once betrayed themselves among men of considerable ability as public speakers, may, we hope, not be chargeable on the infant government; we mean those of sagacity in council, promptitude in action, with steadiness and diligence in the conduct of daily, though subordinate, matters of administration. It is perhaps on the last of these points, even if apparently least momentous, that the most serious apprehensions might with some reason be entertained. The Tories have, for almost half a century, filled all offices under government; so that among many monopolies, from which the public interests have suffered, by no means the least injurious has been a monopoly of official experience, tact, and readiness, by a single party in the state, to the exclusion of a

² The Times of 22nd of November, 1830.

fair share to any and every other: nor is the operation of such a circumstance on the course of public business, under a whig administration, confined to the mere slowness or imperfection with which the machine of state, through the inexperience of its conductors, moves on: besides inexperience in the whig who supersedes the tory subaltern, there may be, from many years of close connexion with tory patrons, something not far short of treachery in the tory underling, who, from generosity or indifference, is left in place, and trusted, when he ought in prudence to be superseded.' After describing other members of the cabinet, the journalist thus proceeds:—'We may just observe, that lord Grey and lord Brougham are both known to the country more as opposition leaders than as practical statesmen; but that they both come into power, pledged in the most solemn manner to their sovereign and the country, as advocates of unflinching retrenchment, and principles of reform adopted without reference to their operation on political friend or foe. The new lord chancellor stands more peculiarly bound before the world, not only to promote parliamentary reform, but to execute, on a broad and mighty scale, a plan of reform in the jurisprudence of the empire. But the first and last object of solicitude with the new ministry must be, that they accede to office by capitulation with the people—they must redress our grievances, or be for ever ruined.'

As it was necessary that the new ministers, who had vacated their seats by accepting office, should be re-elected, an opportunity was taken by the radical party of showing their strength, and an example of the great danger of universal suffrage was exhibited: in a contest at Preston, where the elective franchise is coextensive with the occupancy of houses, the honorable Mr. Stanley, a statesman of distinguished abilities, heir of the house of Derby, and representative of what was denominated moderate reform, met with a mortifying but complete defeat by the notorious Henry Hunt, the great leader of English democrats. During the remainder of this year, no parliamentary business of importance was transacted, except the passing of a regency bill, which had been recommended in the king's speech, and had been introduced into the house of lords on the day when the fate of the late cabinet was sealed in the commons: it provided, in case of his majesty's decease, that if there should be a posthumous child, the queen should be guardian and regent during the minority; if no such event should occur, the duchess of Kent was to be guardian and regent during the minority of her

daughter, the princess Victoria, who was not to marry during that minority without the consent of the king; or, if he died, without the consent of both houses of parliament; and the regency of her mother was to cease, if she, while regent, should marry a foreigner. A select committee was appointed, on the ninth of December, to inquire into the reductions that might be effected in the salaries and emoluments of offices held during the pleasure of the crown by members of either house, and to report their opinion. On the twenty-third, both houses adjourned to the third of February; for ministers required the intervening period to prepare measures which they might submit to parliament; more especially that plan of reform to which they had pledged themselves on accepting office, and by which alone they could hope to retain it.

Among the most interesting events of the present year, may be reckoned the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester railway, though attended by the lamentable death of Mr. Huskisson; who, as one of the members for Liverpool, accompanied the duke of Wellington in the procession: neglecting the caution repeatedly given to visitors against leaving the carriages, this unfortunate gentleman was knocked down by one of the returning engines; when his leg was so dreadfully crushed, that amputation could not be performed; and he died of that disorder which is called tetanus, so commonly occurring after extensive lacerated wounds. The great work, on which so melancholy an accident took place, was at this time the most important undertaking of the kind completed: its cost, including the expenses of a carrying establishment, is said to have exceeded £1,200,000; and the distance, about thirty miles, is performed in a period of time, varying from one hour twenty-five minutes, to one hour forty minutes, including a stoppage of some minutes at the half-way station. Here the employment of locomotive engines, at high-pressure velocities, was first introduced; and in that, as well as other costly experiments, great expenses were incurred, from which subsequent undertakings will be exempt: the accommodation which it has afforded to Liverpool and Manchester can hardly be overrated: as an evidence of this, it may be sufficient to state the fact, that the number of passengers between those towns was trebled in the first year, and long went on increasing; so that, notwithstanding the heavy outlay in its formation, and its current expenditure, the enterprise has been very profitable to the proprietors, paying them a dividend of ten per cent. on their capital. Though it possesses peculiar local

advantages, it may be said to have been the grand stimulus to that extension of a scheme, which threatens to overspread our land with railways: so many new projects and new routes have come before the public, that we are at present perplexed to obtain an intelligible idea of the complex whole; and the result, when the great lines of intercourse shall be completed, and the velocity of movement carried to its height, seems beyond the power of anticipation: this, however, may be said; that the magnitude of the sums risked in this class of speculation indicates a degree of private wealth and enterprise, such as no time or country but our own has ever produced. Many persons affect to feel alarm at this: but it should be recollected, that so much money must be drawn from other investments or from hoarded stores; while the disbursement of these vast sums will be spread over a series of years, and the accumulating power of capital is fully equal to it: of late, indeed, the great difficulty has been to find investment for capital; and the returns for it, whether in lands, or houses, or manufactures, have greatly fallen: the effect of this new demand, if proper caution be used, will be to relieve the capitalist, and give a stimulus to the country—a wholesome stimulus too; because the expenditure is totally distinct from that of war.

In this, as in most other cases of projected improvement, our government and legislature neither took the initiative, nor acted afterwards as propriety and justice required. For their neglect in the first instance, and their aversion to legislate in the French fashion,³ which would have almost destroyed railway enterprise in the bud, they may fairly be excused: but all persons concerned, both speculators and the public, have reason to complain, that they did not guide and direct operations at first, surveying and selecting main lines, such as ought to be made, instead of leaving that selection, in numberless instances, to ignorance, folly, and knavery. Had government issued a commission, aided by scientific persons, to recommend lines, and to discourage excessive speculation by encouraging what was legitimate, many fallacious schemes, great expenditure of capital among the vultures of the law, and ruinous sacrifices in the purchase of land to buy off opposition among the *honorable* members of both houses,⁴ might

³ The French system is radically bad, in that it only undertakes direct lines, or *grandes routes*, neglecting all districts which present no temptation by a prospect of large returns.

⁴ The cases of this kind on the lines of the Eastern and North-

have been prevented! much also of that capital which rival competitors have locked up in the shape of deposits, to the injury of our commercial interests, might have been rescued from its confinement: and how many lives and limbs of her majesty's subjects might have been preserved, had proper officers been appointed, not merely to sanction the opening of a railway for traffic, but to exercise some sort of superintendence over the company which worked it! or if a code of laws, which such a gigantic movement in society demands, had been established for the reward of good conduct, and for the punishment at least, if not the prevention, of evil!⁵

And when government did at length come forward, its injustice in many points, but more especially in seeking to interfere with the dividends, as well as with the property of companies, raised such a clamor as quickly drove it from the scene, until the anarchy and confusion caused by its own neglect, recalled it to a renewal of its exertions. And what ensued? Confessedly a very judicious measure; and far too good to be endured by its originators. A preliminary jurisdiction was given to a department of the board of trade, composed of some of its most intelligent members, with lord Dalhousie at its head, assisted by a secretary second to no man in England for his statistical knowledge;⁶ and this admirable committee was as indefatigable in its investigations, as it was judicious in its recommendations. But how were their exertions received? The minister, in a manner totally unworthy of himself and his high character, directly counteracted the effects of his own measure, declaring in the house of commons that the opinions of this tribunal ought to be utterly disregarded; and that parliament itself should decide upon every new scheme. Hence parliamentary decisions, as

Eastern Companies are too notorious to require public indignation being drawn to them by a more direct allusion: nothing in the annals of chicanery ever equalled them.

⁵ No adequate punishments are annexed to the most flagrant attempts to destroy life by wholesale on her majesty's new highways: the most serious offences, falling short of manslaughter, are visited merely by a small fine at the discretion of a magistrate, or by a term of imprisonment shorter than that awarded to a vagrant: as to the servants of companies, a dismissal from their service seems generally to expiate offences.

⁶ Mr. Laing, who obtained the prize of 100 guineas given by the Atlas newspaper for the best essay on ameliorating the condition of the lower classes.

well as those of preliminary committees, swayed by interest, caprice, and folly, became a perfect lottery—the avarice and hopes of competing speculators were excited to the utmost, a multitude of unfledged companies put in claims for every supposed prize, schemes unworthy of proposal became adopted, whilst others of the highest importance, and facility of construction, were rejected: a pedantic and absurd strictness in preliminary forms was often allowed to throw out the best-recommended enterprize, and substitute a ruinous one in its place; until proportionally as legitimate speculation was discouraged its opposite became augmented, and the result has forced government to limit the amount of capital to be expended. And what is the probable consequence of this?—Why, that a vast mass of capital, which when circulated in England, quickens the pulse of national industry and supplies good to millions of a destitute and despairing population, may be diverted into foreign channels. Let us hope therefore, that in future legislation regarding this important subject, heavy blows and wanton discouragement may not be aimed at it. In critical times which involve the transition of large interests, it is not easy to estimate accurately the influence of this new element; much less to replace it if lost, or to remedy errors committed against it: for though like the old war system, it gives a strong stimulus to production and consumption, yet it does not, like that system, anticipate resources, to expend them unproductively; and if railway speculation be well directed and protected, there is no reason why exhaustion and depression should follow in its track. Let government then treat it, as it never yet has treated it, like a great national question; more especially as our colonies and dependencies are beginning to demand attention. The French system need by no means be adopted, though a few leaves out of its book might be advantageously taken; nor is there any necessity for discouraging private enterprize, one great source of British grandeur, provided it be established on a firm basis, regulated by just principles, and protected against that insane spirit of competition which has led to so much distress and ruin: for, let it not be supposed that *competition* in railways will be an unmixed benefit: on the contrary a well-regulated monopoly would be much better able to accommodate the public, and reduce fares, than a ruinous competition, ending in a coalition, which would eventually make the public pay for its losses: the unreasonable views and demands too of that most tyrannical of all monsters, the

public, which is ever crying out like the horse-leech, 'give, give,' ought to be repressed: in short, a wise and prudent government would endeavor to legislate equitably for all interests, whilst it promotes a system which is daily sending a fertilizing stream of wealth through the nation, to exercise the brawny sinews of its million arms.

But there are still higher views to be taken of these gigantic schemes: they should be considered in their moral and ultimate effects, as the benevolent designs of Providence to ameliorate the human race. The greater the communication between nations, the more do national antipathies and asperities wear off: as men come to know each other better, the more do they consider each other as branches of one stock, as members of a common family, to be loved as brethren: and when they have attained to this character of love, how certainly must the horrors of war give way to the arts of peace! Even let it be supposed that any particular nation should desire to involve others in those miseries which in this history we have so frequently depicted and deplored; how would it long be able to resist a coalition of the myriads which within a month might be collected on its frontier?

But the prospect of the christian philanthropist may be extended still farther: for when the east and the west, when India and Africa, shall obtain, as assuredly they will obtain, their vast lines of internal communication, what an opening will be made for that best of all peace-makers, the Gospel of our blessed Saviour! It is hardly too much to say that a full development of the grand powers of steam and iron, preparing in the desert a highway for God's missionaries, will tend to the fulfilment of those glorious prophecies, which declare—that the sword shall be beaten into the ploughshare—that the lion and the lamb shall lie down together—and that nation shall rise up against nation no more. And how much is this conviction strengthened, when in connexion with the materials of change we reflect upon the change of agents! One of the most remarkable features of our age is the stupendous grandeur of commercial enterprize, and the direct action of whole nations, as contrasted with the isolated efforts of individual energy: we no longer see kings, emperors, and conquerors standing out in prominent relief; but merchant princes, and flourishing communities occupying their places: what in former ages was done by the great, now is done by the many; and communities have a larger and more enduring influence than courts. As usual, Great Britain takes the lead in those

enterprizes which seem destined by Providence to change the face of the globe: and if her influence now be great, what will it become, when steam completing its triumph, and sweeping away all local boundaries, shall of England, Scotland, and Ireland, make one vast metropolis? When to the freedom and extent of an empire, shall be united the compactness of a city, and the security of a fortress? To this consummation she is fast approaching; and during her progress to it, the face of the country and condition of its inhabitants must undergo much change: but let the alarmist quiet himself by reflecting that everything connected with humanity is doomed to change; and the changes which have already occurred are but preparatory to still greater: whatever may be thought of the minor accidents of life, no christian can fail to see the finger of God visible in those great events which affect the destiny of nations: at the same time let it never be forgotten, that change here may be intended, and certainly ought, to prepare us for a greater change hereafter; that through the vicissitudes of human life we are all hastening towards a country where no ulterior change can take place; but where our lot, regulated by our conduct here, will be fixed throughout eternity.

At the close of this year a special commission was sent for the trial of persons guilty of riotous and incendiary practices in the southern counties; when numbers were convicted of destroying machinery, firing barns and stacks, and forcibly entering houses for robbery or other unlawful purposes. Many were convicted, and a few were executed: but more experienced the lenity of government, which, however commendable, failed of its purpose; for within a short time similar outrages occurred with equal, if not greater, malignity. This crime of incendiarism, then new, though now unhappily so common in England, indicates great demoralization in a peasantry once distinguished by industry, subordination, and good morals.

Among the affairs of foreign states, it only remains to notice, that the spirit of popular insurrection, stimulated by success in France, appeared at Leipsic, Dresden, Hesse Cassel, Hamburg, Berne, Basle, and Poland: in this latter country, however, it sprung not from civil discord, or political machinations; but rather from the harsh and insulting proceedings of its viceroy, the grand duke Constantine, whose savage character had excluded him from popularity wherever his power had been felt. A contest took place in the streets of Warsaw,

whence the Russian troops were expelled; and the archduke was eventually obliged to retire from the frontier; not however until it had been represented to him, that it was the universal wish of the nation, that the constitution should be carried into complete execution; that the promise of Alexander should be fulfilled, of incorporating with Poland its ancient provinces, now under the dominion of Russia; but that no demands pointed to the dethronement of the emperor as their king, in whose name had been effected all the changes lately made in the government: doubtful, however, in what light Nicholas I. would regard these proceedings, the Poles prepared themselves for resistance, if he should determine to treat them as rebels: general Klopicki was named commander-in-chief, and soon found himself at the head of a regular and respectable army: divided, however, and mutilated as Poland was, it seemed a hopeless prospect for a portion of it to engage unassisted in a struggle with the gigantic power of Russia; while to this was added the apprehension, (too soon, alas! to be realised) lest Austria and Prussia, in fear for their plunder, should be adverse to its cause; the Poles, however, made themselves ready for the contest with stout hearts; and to secure energy and promptitude in their measures, invested Klopicki with dictatorial power: but even in assuming this office, which was to last only until the chambers could be convened, the general disclaimed any intention, on the part of his country, to throw off its king, or to demand anything more than an independent national existence under him, together with that free constitution which had once been promised. Of what avail, however, were promises with Nicholas and his Russian nobles, who now viewed unhappy Poland with eyes of conquest and spoliation, like those with which English monarchs and their favorites once were accustomed to regard Ireland? Two commissioners were sent to St. Petersburg, to attempt some terms of compromise; but the autocrat would not listen to their representations, and issued his proclamation, threatening the unhappy Poles with severe punishment for conduct, which he described as 'horrid treason.' The result is too well known; and while the apathy of our own government and that of France is little to be commended, who can sufficiently execrate the imperial and royal kites, who watched over the skeleton of Poland, while the eagle picked its bones?

Before the revolution of July, the French government had sent a powerful fleet and army to Algiers; when the dey, having capitulated to the notorious general Bourmont, retired

to Naples, and left the head of the piratical states in the hands of its conquerors. One of the chief motives for this expedition was to obtain the glory of a military exploit which had baffled the greatest nations of Europe, and thus open an avenue to popularity for the bigoted and despotic government of Charles X. 'Allah! Allah! God is great, and the avenger of injustice!' exclaimed the expatriated dey in his southern asylum, when he heard of the northern flight subsequently taken by the French monarch. In Spain, 'the beloved Ferdinand,' deeply offended the Carlists by his abolition of the Salique law, in favor of the child, if it should be a female, with which his queen was pregnant; and thus gave rise to a war, which long desolated the northern provinces of Spain, as well as to the quadripartite treaty, under which it was hoped that harassed country might enjoy the blessings of a constitutional government. In Portugal, Don Miguel, still cut off from direct communication with all European sovereigns, except his worthy brother of Spain, continued, by means of special commissions, to take vengeance on those of his subjects suspected of political delinquencies, and to supply his wants by the confiscation of their property: blood indeed had ceased to flow; but a more terrible and lingering destruction was ensured to his victims, by their deportation to servitude in the African settlements: at the beginning of this year, about fifty persons, whose only offence was, that they were suspected of being malcontents, were shipped off for Angola: though of good families and respectable character, they were chained up with the most abandoned ruffians, robbers, and assassins, doomed to this punishment for their crimes: to revive the horrors of a slave-ship in the middle passage, they were stowed away in the smallest space possible, within a vessel heavily laden with colonial stores; and while the best accommodation was reserved for malefactors, the more pestilential and deadly berths were left to magistrates, members of the Cortes, and other reputable persons, victims of their own loyalty or of their vile master's suspicions: out of respect for their former station, and pity for their present sufferings, these men had been for some time spared the fatigues of hard labor; but the superintendent soon received orders to discontinue that misplaced lenity.⁷ The political prisoners in the dungeons at Lisbon were scarcely less fortunate: trials they could not obtain; nor could any, even when known to be innocent, procure their liberty: those who were confined in the castle of

⁷ See Annual Register for 1830, p. 295, &c.

St. Julian, underwent such cruelties from the infamous Telles Jordao, that hundreds were driven to insanity; and the rest procured a petition to be sent in their behalf to Miguel: but their complaints were poured into ears deaf to mercy; not even the death of his mother, who had been justly blamed for much of this cruelty, made any change in the tiger's disposition which she had imparted to her son: yet this was the monster, whom the duke of Wellington's administration was anxious to treat as a sovereign; and for him, its adherents, when out of office, were continually taunting earl Grey, because that nobleman disdained to contaminate the fair fame of Britain by an alliance with such infamy. At length with little regard to his own interests, he began to turn his arms against his benefactors; when part of the Portuguese navy was employed in an inefficient attempt to blockade Terceira, where the regency, in the name of the young queen, was still ruling; but Miguel made this a pretext for seizing some English vessels and imprisoning some British residents at Lisbon, without any charge against them: though deaf to all remonstrances from our consul, he did not long hesitate, when a threat to employ force reached him, to restore the pretended prizes, give compensation to all parties who had been wronged, and make public acknowledgement of his offences in the royal gazette.

In the early part of this year, the regal sovereignty of Greece, which had been declined by prince John of Saxony, was formally offered by the protecting powers to prince Leopold of Saxe Coburg: but though he had once been extremely anxious for this prize, he had lately been worked on by the representations of the crafty Capo d'Istria; while he saw in the illness of George IV., which was likely to terminate fatally, new prospects opening to his ambition: the question therefore regarding the narrow, inconvenient boundaries of this new kingdom, and the separation of Candia from its territory, formed a ready pretext for his rejection of the offer; nor did the public voice disapprove his repugnance to become the ruler of a discontented people, under the auspices of a foreign league. In Belgium, where this favorite of fortune finally obtained a crown, the progress of military events was interrupted by foreign interference, but not before the insurgents had made themselves masters of Antwerp; general Chassé having withdrawn his troops into the citadel, and established a convention, by which he was to remain there unmolested, on condition of his not firing into the town, while the insurgent army retired from its neighborhood. The united

Netherlands had been formed into one kingdom by Great Britain, Austria, Russia, Prussia, and France; which powers held themselves intitled to look after their own work: some of them would willingly have interfered, for the purpose of compelling the Belgians to submit by force: the Rhenish provinces of Prussia were directly exposed to the infection of that spirit which had severed the united kingdom; the Germanic confederation was already attacked by formal claims on Luxemburg; and the king of the Netherlands had appealed to the allied powers to preserve that throne which they themselves had set up: on the other hand, it was certain that the new government of France would favor the independence of Belgium; and its people would desire nothing more ardently than a pretext for war, which might terminate in the restoration of these provinces to their dominion. One party in Belgium openly declared, that 'her interests demanded a reunion with France; and there was no doubt that she would receive the protection of that power, in case any of the allies should employ force to renew her connexion with Holland.' armed interference, therefore, was out of the question, since all deprecated the chance of another general war; nevertheless, all agreed to interpose their good offices; and as their first object was to stop hostilities, a protocol, signed at London on the fourth of November, signified that these must cease on both sides. This document further declared, that new arrangements were necessary; though not such as would affect the rights of which the king of the Netherlands and the Germanic confederation exercised over the grand duchy of Luxemburg. The plenipotentiaries of the five great powers also decided that the navigation of the Scheldt should be free from the twentieth of January; a measure which England had frequently taken up arms to prevent; and at this time the French minister for foreign affairs, in his place in the chamber, declared that the free navigation of rivers was a principle which France had proclaimed, and which she would cause to be respected. So much more liberal and enlightened were nations now becoming! A series of negotiations, however, commenced, involving as many difficulties, and counteracted by as many conflicting interests, as any piece of diplomatic agency in the history of European politics.

While this was the aspect of foreign affairs, our own domestic concerns were far removed from a state of tranquillity. In the sister kingdom a constant agitation of the anti-union question kept up the feverish anxiety of that irritable nation;

whilst in England unsettled feelings, especially among the peasantry, still showed themselves in mischievous and lamentable excesses. Many counties were kept in continual disturbance by the commission of midnight crimes; while incendiarism increased to such a pitch, that the militia were embodied, special commissions were issued for delivering the crowded gaols, and a form of prayer was drawn up by the heads of the church for the restoration of domestic peace and happiness.

In the mean time the members of administration, supported by numberless petitions, were occupied in framing that new parliamentary constitution, which was expected to be a *panacea* for all disorders in the state; and perhaps there never was a period when domestic and foreign affairs formed a stronger combination in favor of any public measure: everything indeed for a very long time had been gradually tending to such a consummation; and it had long been seen, that reform must follow the progress of intelligence, as light follows the rising of the sun: the old system, when fully exposed and understood, necessarily disgusted every liberal and informed mind; and this system, by the late war, and the expenditure consequent on it, had been carried to its highest pitch. The debt of Great Britain, the weight of taxation, the distress produced by agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial failures, the alteration of our currency, and the actual misery of a starving population;—these causes, together with the example of France, acting on minds prepared for change, set the whole kingdom in a ferment; and not only the correction of acknowledged abuses, but immediate relief from every national calamity, was confidently expected by the multitude, in a reform of parliament. However men might differ as to the means by which this object was to be attained, the demand itself signified, in the mouths of all, that the power and efficacy of the democratical part of the constitution should be increased: therefore, if the British constitution was to be preserved, the answer to the question, whether reform should be granted, depended on the degree to which the control of the great body of the people, acting by the house of commons over the measures of government, should be augmented; and this was a question to be decided by sound reason; not by the mere fact that certain bodies of men desired political power. The petitions now industriously manufactured throughout the country were, as might have been expected, generally deficient regarding this, the only intelligible question that could arise; yet they fully

answered the purpose of ministers, by announcing the general proposition, that change was necessary.

But beside the usual machinery of petitions, political unions had already been extensively formed, for the purpose of organising large numbers of individuals into one body, which might act on the public mind around them, and press their opinions on the government, in a spirit of dictation, though under the pretence of support.

In this state of affairs parliament met, pursuant to adjournment, on the third of February, when earl Grey stated, that, although it had been a work of considerable difficulty, ministers had at last succeeded in framing a proposition which would be effective, without exceeding the bounds of a just and well-advised moderation: it had been unanimously sanctioned by government, and would be introduced into the house of commons at as early a period as possible. Accordingly, on the first of March, this great measure was brought forward by lord John Russell, to whom, though not a cabinet minister, it was entrusted, in consideration of his constant and strenuous exertions in the cause of parliamentary reform. After a very elaborate speech, which his lordship commenced by declaring that ministers wished to take their stand between hostile parties, though he laid it down as a principle that the question of right was in favor of the reformers,—since the ancient constitution of the country declared, that no man should be taxed for the support of the state who had not consented by himself or his representative to the imposition of the taxes,—he proceeded to detail the plan by which ministers proposed to satisfy a demand for reform, which, as they themselves believed, could be no longer resisted. That plan had been so framed as to remove all reasonable complaints of the people; which complaints were principally directed, first, against nomination by individuals; secondly, against elections by corporations; and, thirdly, against electioneering expenses. With regard to the first two grounds of complaint, the ministerial plan consisted, first, of disfranchisement, in whole or in part, of places which had hitherto sent members to parliament; secondly, of enfranchisement, in order to enable places, which had been hitherto unrepresented, to elect members; thirdly, of an extension of the franchise, in order to increase the number of electors in those places which were to be allowed to retain, in whole or in part, their existing privileges: all voters were to be duly registered; and in order to diminish the expenses of elections, as well as opportunities for bribery, drunkenness, and corrup-

tion, the duration of the poll was to be diminished; and that for counties to be taken simultaneously at different places. His lordship, having thus drawn a general outline of the bill, entered into the changes that were to be made in the representation of Scotland and Ireland: the general result of the measure, he said, would be to create a new constituency of about half a million; for the increase in counties would be about 100,000, that in towns already represented about 110,000, in new boroughs 50,000, in London 95,000, in Scotland 60,000, and in Ireland perhaps 40,000: on this numerous body, connected with property, and possessing a valuable stake in the country, it would depend, if any future struggle should arise, to support parliament and the throne, in carrying that struggle to a successful termination: the probability of possessing this franchise would be an inducement to good conduct; for when a man found, that by being rated at a certain rent, and by paying rates, he became intitled to vote in the election of members of that house, he would feel an inducement to be careful, frugal, and punctual in his dealings; to preserve a character among his neighbors, and the place which he might hold in society; so that this large increase of the constituency would provide for political and moral improvement among the people. The necessary results of the arrangements he had detailed, was to diminish the number of members by sixty-two; but it was thought that this diminution would enable the house to transact the public business more conveniently and effectually. After accounting satisfactorily for two omissions which might possibly be brought as charges against him,—that no provision was made for shortening the duration of parliaments, or for introducing the vote by ballot,—his lordship concluded by requesting leave to bring in his bill. This motion brought on a debate, which lasted seven nights, and elicited opinions from more than seventy speakers; but in the end, leave was granted to the noble mover of the bill to introduce it into the house; which was accordingly done on the fourteenth of March. It was not certainly known, why the opponents of this measure allowed so keen and lengthened a contest to terminate without a division: ministers afterwards admitted, that, if it had taken place, they expected to have been left in a minority; but the opposition did not at that time form a combined body, with any regular plan of operations, under the guidance of any able leader.

From the moment when the general outlines of the plan had

been discussed in parliament, what an excitement was created ! what a struggle was determined on ! the peer trembling for his boroughs, the aspiring protégé for his interest, the diplomatist for his office, the ecclesiastic for his church revenues, the constitutionalist for the monarchy itself. These were not aware what changes may be effected in England without endangering the character and safety of its institutions : they had mistrusted the good sense and good feeling of the people ; had long opposed popular opinion ; and had deferred every equitable compromise until it was too late to propose or accept it with grace : and although few of those changes were proposed, for which violent reformers had been most clamorous ; yet such persons immediately altered their tone, and professed to receive the bill with joy : it gave them, indeed, less than they desired, but it promised more than they had expected ; and they were told by their leaders, whose hopes lay in the future, that as ministers had determined to go no farther, all would be lost, unless government were strenuously supported by those who thought a change desirable : hence their determination to forget what they considered its defects ; to be silent regarding the ballot, universal suffrage, and annual parliaments ; to enforce the scheme by every legal method ; and to make ‘ the bill, the whole bill, and nothing but the bill,’ the watch-word of their party. On the twenty-first, the second reading was moved ; when sir R. Vyvyan, one of the members for Cornwall, after insisting on the danger of introducing into our legislature a democratic influence, to which in no long time the other branches would be compelled to yield,—proposed, as an amendment, ‘ that the bill should be read that day six months :’ on this motion the house divided ; when there appeared for the amendment, 301 ; against it, 302 ; leaving lord John Russell a majority of only one in an assembly of more than 600 members : it was also well known, that this very majority contained many who had expressed a determination not to support all the provisions of the bill ; and more still, who, being too timid to resist the principle of the measure, were equally resolved to modify it in committee, though their intention was not declared. When his lordship, therefore, on the eighteenth of April, moved the order of the day for a committee of the whole house, general Gascoyne, one of the members for Liverpool, endeavored to get rid of the bill by a motion for counteracting one of its essential clauses, respecting the diminution of the number of representatives : this produced a violent and contentious debate, which,

being adjourned to the following day, concluded by leaving ministers in a minority of eight. The chancellor of the exchequer had declared in his speech, that he knew the object of this amendment had a tendency to destroy the bill; and it was evident from the beginning that a majority of the present house could not be relied on by its supporters; but ministers did not seem at first determined to have recourse to a dissolution: at length, however, being harassed by the stanch reformers on one side, and on the other by intemperate speeches of anti-reformers in both houses, they resolved on this measure: the king went down to the house of lords; and, in the midst of one of the most turbulent scenes that ever occurred in that place, prorogued parliament to the tenth of May: next day it was dissolved, and a new parliament appointed to meet on the fourteenth of June. The whole empire was by this step thrown into a state of agitation and excitement: in many places, the dissolution was celebrated by illuminations; and in London, the unrestrained rabble vented their rage on the houses of individuals who had expressed sentiments unfavorable to the bill: among them, was that of Mr. Baring, the first of English merchants; and of the duke of Wellington, the chief of British warriors. This was followed by the most violently contested elections ever known in the British islands; and though the old borough system still remained unimpaired, wherever any election partaking of a popular character took place, the tories were discomfited: general Gascoyne was thrown out for Liverpool, sir R. Vyvyan for Cornwall, Mr. Banks for Dorsetshire; and in most places the popular cause was triumphant.

The important nature of the reform question, toward which so many other measures had a converging tendency, demands so large a space in these pages, that we must be content with alluding more cursorily to other matters connected with our later annals. On the eleventh of February, lord Althorp opened his budget by enumerating 210 places under government, which it was proposed to reduce or abolish altogether; reductions attended with an economy of patronage rather than of public expenditure: he estimated the charge for the year at £46,850,000; while the revenue, on account of the many taxes repealed, would yield only £47,150,000, and thus give an excess over the charge of only about £300,000; a very scanty allowance, which did not afford much room for the reduction of taxation: still he was of opinion that something might be done; especially by reducing those imposts which

pressed on the industry of the country; by relieving trade from fiscal embarrassments; and by introducing in many cases a more equal distribution of taxes. A vehement opposition was made to many of his lordship's changes, more especially to a payment on transfers in the public funds; which he agreed to abandon, though a large party in the country, suffering under the effects of heavy taxation, were unable to see the justice of exempting funded property from the payment of a small sum, in return for the protection afforded to it: ministers were also defeated, on a division, in regard to a proposed diminution of duties on Baltic timber, and an augmentation of those on timber grown in Canada: among other items of the budget abandoned or modified, was a tax on steamboat passengers, which being denounced from all sides of the house, was thrown overboard; and an increased duty on our colonial wines, which his lordship consented to reduce. When the arrangements of the civil list were considered, members of the late administration expressed great satisfaction, that the present ministers, so loud against profuse expenditure when out of office, and pledged to retrenchment if they came in, had been forced to acknowledge that they could not carry economy in this matter farther than it had been carried by their predecessors: the most material changes made, after the abolition of certain offices, were the reduction of the pension list in future to the sum of £75,000 per annum, and the subtraction of £460,000 from the civil list, to be placed under the control of parliament; but this system of retrenchment was far from satisfactory to Messrs. Hume, Hunt, and other members of that party. Another point, on which ministers had to encounter the opposition of old allies, and to receive the support of former antagonists, was a proposal, which they found themselves bound in prudence to make for an increase of the army by 7680 men: no opposition, however, was offered to a resolution moved in consequence of a royal message, assigning to the queen, in case she should survive his majesty, £100,000 per annum, with Marlborough-house and Bushy-park, as town and country residences. Statements relating to the enormous expenditure on Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle were laid before parliament, when the excess above the estimates occasioned much indignation among many of its members; and the papers respecting this waste of public money were referred to a committee of inquiry.

The new parliament met on the fourteenth of June; but a week having elapsed while members were sworn in and a

speaker was elected, his majesty did not open the session in person till the twenty-first; when he read his speech with remarkable firmness, and returned to St. James's palace amid the enthusiastic greetings and acclamations of the people. After some warm altercation among the peers on a question of order, and in both houses respecting the conduct of ministers, as not acting with proper vigor to suppress riotous proceedings, the addresses were agreed to without any amendment being proposed. On the twenty-fourth, lord John Russell again brought forward, in the name of ministers, that measure of reform which, in their opinion, was calculated to maintain unimpaired the prerogatives of the crown, with the rights and liberties of the people: after taking a retrospective view of what had occurred in the late parliament, and eulogising the spirit of patriotism manifested by the great body of electors throughout this kingdom in the choice of independent representatives, his lordship proceeded to observe, 'that with regard to the general features of the plan, he would not enter particularly into them, because they were substantially the same as those of the measure recently proposed; and as some slight alterations therein made were improvements intended to carry its principles into effect, such details might be left till the bill went into committee.' Sir Robert Peel expressed at once his unaltered sentiments against the measure; but declined to discuss its merits till the second reading; which, at his suggestion, was postponed from the thirtieth of June, as originally intended, to the fourth of July: on that day, an animated debate took place, which was adjourned to the fifth; when the speech of Mr. Macaulay, a young barrister, and nominee of lord Lansdowne for the borough of Calne, elicited much applause: its conclusion was as follows: 'the country and their children, for ages to come, would call this the second bill of rights—the greater charter of the liberties of England: he believed that the year 1831 was destined to exhibit to mankind the first example of a great, complicated, and deeply rooted system of abuses removed without violence, bloodshed, and rapine; all points fully debated, all forms observed, the fruits of industry not destroyed, and the authority of the law not suspended: these were things which might well make Englishmen proud of the age and country in which they lived: these were things which might make them look with confidence to the future destinies of the human race; which might make them look forward to a long series of tranquil and happy years, during which nothing would disturb the concord of a popular

government and a loyal people; of years, in which if war should be inevitable, it would find the people a united nation; of years, pre-eminently distinguished, by the mitigation of public burdens, by the prosperity of industry, by the reformation of jurisprudence, and by all the victories of peace; in which, far more than in military triumphs, consisted the true prosperity of states, and the true glory of statesmen. It was with such feelings and hopes that he gave his cordial assent to this measure of reform, which in itself he considered desirable, and which, in the present temper of the public mind, appeared to him indispensably necessary to the repose of the empire, and the stability of government.'

The discussion this day was closed by sir George Murray, one of the late ministry, who also concluded his speech with a prophecy, though totally opposite in character to that of the member for Calne. He said, 'this bill would have the effect of raising up another Cromwell, who was perhaps even then exulting in secret at the success of the present measure; and saying to himself at that moment, in the words of Oliver, his prototype—'the Lord hath delivered them into my hands:' the period for the appearance of this personage in the field had not yet arrived; he would not be there before the fifth act of the piece; and then, perhaps, he would be seen endeavoring to gather together the fragments of the constitution, which the noble lord's measure would have scattered and dispersed.' Another adjournment took place till the following day, when sir Robert Peel went over the whole ground of argument, historically and politically: he maintained, 'that our small boroughs were not a usurpation on the rights of the people; but that they had existed at an earlier period, and had continued ever since: although it might not be easy to defend the sale of these boroughs; yet it would be impossible to eradicate this evil, without depriving the nation of much good, which more than counterbalanced it. There had been no reform of parliament for more than 400 years; but so elastic were the principles which gave it force, in accommodating themselves to the spirit of the age and circumstances of the people, that the house had governed this country far better than any other country had ever been governed: feeling thus, he would give his opposition to the bill; which, in his opinion, went to diminish, not to increase, the security of our permanent liberty and happiness.' Lord J. Russell closed the debate with a defence of his plan, and at five o'clock in the morning a division took place; when the numbers were, for the second

reading 367, and for the amendment 231, leaving a majority of 136 in favor of ministers.

On the twelfth, it was proposed that the house should go into committee; when lord Maitland, one of the members for Appleby, rose to oppose the disfranchisement of that borough, on the score of a mistake in the population returns; moving that counsel be heard against the bill, as far as regarded that point: ministers, however, declared, they would resist any such inquiry to the utmost; asking, whether the progress of this great measure was to be stopped for the examination of so insignificant a case; and whether a majority of the house would allow themselves to be so trifled with: the bill, it was said, was not one of pains and penalties; and members would be heard, in committee, concerning this or any other borough: after a stormy debate, the motion was negatived; when an adjournment was moved, and disposed of in a similar manner. The original motion, 'that the speaker do leave the chair,' being again put, an amendment was proposed, 'that the house do now adjourn:' this produced another violent altercation, the result of which placed ministers in a powerful majority: after five more distinct motions for an adjournment of the debate, all of which were defeated, the bill went into a committee; and the house broke up at half-past seven in the morning.

The measure was now discussed, clause by clause; subject, not only to the opposition of argumentative and high-minded statesmen, but to all the harassing vexations of party faction, from the twelfth of July to the fifteenth of September; when it was ordered to be engrossed: on the nineteenth, lord J. Russell moved its third reading; and there appeared, for the motion 113, against it 58: two days more, however, were occupied in debating the question, 'that the bill do pass;' in the course of which, several speakers exerted their oratorical powers, though much novelty of argument was not to be expected: among them, none was more animated than sir Charles Wetherell, who hoped that the house would take warning from France, where concessions had been followed only by destruction; and he concluded his speech, by expressing his conviction, that the bill, if carried, would subvert the throne, the church, and, ultimately, the liberties of the people: the numbers, on a division, were ayes 345, noes 236; leaving a majority of 109 for ministers. Next day, lord J. Russell, accompanied by many members, appeared at the bar of the upper house, and delivered the bill to the lord chancellor; when it was read a first time *pro formâ*, and ordered to be read

a second time on the third of October. We must not forget to mention, that at this time lord Brougham's bill for reforming the court of bankruptcy was passing through the house of lords; a measure for which the British public is deeply indebted to that noble lord; its two chief principles, a commutation of the old lists of commissioners into fixed tribunals, and an appointment of official assignees, having wonderfully facilitated the dispatch of business and the recovery of dividends.

On Monday, the first of August, the ceremony of opening new London Bridge was honoured by the presence of the king and queen, who partook of a splendid banquet, in a pavilion erected on this magnificent structure: on the day following, another exhibition of royalty took place, in a procession of their majesties to the house of lords, that the king might give his assent to the queen's dower bill: this document having been read by the clerk, his majesty gave it the royal assent with the customary formalities; when the queen rose, and made an obeisance thrice to the two houses then assembled; after which their majesties retired, accompanied by the various officers of their suite. After a short adjournment, on the same day, the house resumed its sitting; and, in consequence of a royal message, delivered by earl Grey, the importance of making a farther provision to support the honor and dignity of the princess Victoria, as presumptive heiress to the crown, was taken into consideration; when it appeared, that in consequence of prince Leopold's election to the Belgic throne, the allowance of £6000 per annum, which he had hitherto made to his sister and niece, had been withdrawn: lord Althorp, in the other house, gave the same account as a reason for an additional grant of £10,000 per annum to the income of the duchess, a large portion of which was to be expended in the maintenance and education of her daughter; and the resolution was agreed to. On the eleventh of this month many of our West India islands suffered by a dreadful hurricane; but especially Barbadoes, where the government-house was unroofed, two churches were destroyed, and all much injured; the custom-house was blown down; and the barracks buried forty soldiers in their ruins: the sugar-mills also were destroyed and the crops uprooted by the wind, while 3000 persons were killed and numerous families utterly ruined. An afflicting calamity also befel us nearer home, in the loss of the *Rothsay Castle* steamer, off the coast of Anglesey, when 180 persons miserably perished, chiefly through the misconduct of the captain and

crew, and the neglect of the owners who had sent off their vessel unprovided with a boat.

The eighth of September was fixed for the coronation of William IV. ; when this ceremony, shorn of the grotesque and inappropriate pageantry of chivalric times, was confined to the interior of the Abbey ; and, as former coronations had been attended with great expense, no dinner took place in Westminster-hall on the present occasion. The royal procession moved in state carriages from St. James's palace, escorted by superb bodies of cavalry ; and as soon as the king appeared, he was received with cheers from the multitude, such as greeted his father in the best of times ; his majesty, the first naval king that ever sat on the British throne, was dressed in an admiral's uniform ; and his august consort was in white, with brilliants in her head-dress : as the procession passed, the bands, stationed at different points, played our national anthem ; and the enthusiasm of the people seemed carried to the highest pitch : in conformity with precedents, this coronation was distinguished by the grant of new honors, in the creation of three marquisses, four earls, and fifteen barons ; which increase of the peerage was soon afterwards succeeded by an addition of twenty-eight names to the list of baronets. On the twenty-second a grand naval spectacle was exhibited at Woolwich, in the launch of the Thunderer, a fine ship of eighty-four guns, built on sir R. Seppings' plan of a round stern, when her majesty performed the ceremony of naming the vessel.

As the time approached when the fate of parliamentary reform was to be decided in the upper house, the feelings of the public were wound up to the highest degree of excitement : numerous petitions were presented to the lords from counties, cities, corporations, religious societies, and individuals, praying, and in some cases even demanding, that they would pass the bill without mutilation. Previously to any regular discussion of the measure, occasional opportunities were taken by several of their lordships to deliver an opinion on the general question ; and from these light skirmishes, it was soon seen that the great battle would be obstinately contested : at length, on Tuesday, the third of October, after the presentation of sixty-three petitions in favor of the bill by the lord chancellor, fifty-three by lord Radnor, eight by the marquis of Cleveland, and a large number of other peers, the order of the day was read ; when earl Grey commenced a very elaborate and energetic oration, in which he gave a brief sketch of his own political life ; declaring that he had been the constant and

consistent advocate of parliamentary reform for nearly half a century; and that too, amid circumstances of much difficulty and danger, in seasons of great political convulsion and violence: his lordship was at first deeply affected, and for a few minutes was obliged, amid the sympathising cheers of the house, to resume his seat. After enforcing, by many arguments and apposite illustrations, the necessity of timely concession to the demands of the people, he turned in conclusion to the episcopal bench; and, addressing its occupants, said, 'that the eyes of the nation were on them:' he called on them, 'to set their house in order, and prepare to meet the coming storm; to consider seriously what would be the opinion of the country, would a measure, on which the nation had fixed its hope, be defeated by their influence.' As they were the ministers of peace, earnestly did he hope that the result of their votes would be such as might tend to tranquillity and happiness: as regarded all their lordships, spiritual and temporal, he hoped the consequences of a rejection of this bill would be seriously considered; for those consequences would be serious. As to the effect which the rejection or adoption of this measure might produce to himself, or the administration of which he formed a part, it was a matter of insignificance: he would only say, that by this measure he was prepared to stand or fall: the question of his continuance in office for one hour, would depend on the prospect of being able to carry through, what he considered so important to the tranquillity, to the safety, and to the happiness of this country: he concluded with moving, 'that the bill be read a second time.' There can be no doubt that his lordship was deeply impressed with a conviction of the excellency of the measure which he so strenuously recommended, as well as of its necessity in the present state of affairs; but his best friends must regret his injudicious, not to say cruel appeal to the spiritual peers, at a period when the public mind was in so high a state of excitement.

Lord Wharncliffe next rose, and observed, 'that the measure, if completed, would draw into the house of commons all the power and privileges of the lords, and probably of the crown itself: the constitution could not go on with such a system as that which this bill would establish, taking away all checks on the ebullition of popular feeling, and supplying nothing in their place.' The noble baron, after dissecting the bill, and pointing out several inconsistencies, went on to show, that a house of commons, formed on such a basis, would

become too much an image of the people; in which case, it would be impossible that three or four hundred titled persons should have the power of arresting any of its movements: the dangerous position, in which their lordships now stood, proved the truth of the assertion; they had a popular, or rather a delegated house of commons, which in consequence had passed this measure; and they were told, that they had nothing to do but to record and register the decree: he concluded, by moving 'that the bill be rejected;' but on learning that this mode of proceeding implied disrespect toward the lower house, his lordship was permitted to withdraw his motion for another, 'that the second reading be postponed to that day six months.' An adjournment of the debate then took place till next day; when the principal speakers were,—for the bill, viscount Melbourne; and against it, lord Harrowby and the duke of Wellington: the latter, after adverting to the declaration against reform made by himself last session, and complaining of being misrepresented, declared that this bill went to violate both the principle and practice of the constitution: the town representation would be thrown by it into the hands of close self-elected committees; and by an undue enlargement of town constituencies, the balance of the agricultural representation of counties would be destroyed: the bill would create a fierce democratic constituency, and consequently a fierce and democratic body of representatives; so that under it the churches of England and Ireland would soon cease to exist. Next day, the adjourned debate was resumed; when the earl of Dudley said, 'that the measure, framed as it now was, proceeded on the monstrous supposition, that we had never had a good government, and that the people had always been deprived of their rights: the populace had been induced to support it, foolishly conceiving that it would extend commerce, make trade more brisk, give more general employment to the laboring classes, and make bread cheaper.' The marquis of Lansdowne admitted changes to be great evils, especially in so complicated a state of society as our own: but it would be found, from a careful perusal of the statute-book, that, in those important periods of our history, the reformation, the revolution, the succession of the house of Hanover, the union with Scotland, and that with Ireland, as well as the recent disfranchisement of Irish freeholders,—the laws, legalising those events, were but so many instances in which the old institutions of the country were made to bend to a great political expediency.

The marquis of Londonderry characterised the measure as unjust, unconstitutional, and unprincipled; framed for the purpose of rendering whig supremacy perpetual. Viscount Goderich justly observed, 'this was no new question, having been agitated through a period of more than half a century; and though it might occasionally slumber, it could not become wholly dormant; since there was something in the constitution of human nature which made it impossible for the subject ever to be extinguished.' Lord Plunkett stigmatised the assertion,—that this bill would become an instrument in the hands of the people, to destroy the church and other established institutions, as an outrageous libel on them: in the debate, however, next day, that assertion was strongly repeated by lords Wynford and Eldon; the latter of whom entered on a long train of legal argument, against the right of parliament to deprive boroughs and corporations of privileges, to which they were as much intitled as the members of that house were to their peerages. The lord chancellor next rose, and, in a speech of four hours' duration, went over all the arguments that had been brought against this measure in the course of the preceding debates; on some of which he animadverted with great severity, and in a style of sarcasm which elicited peals of merriment at the expense of noble personages attacked: in conclusion, he requested them not to persuade themselves, that even if the present government were to be driven from office by the defeat of this bill, they would get rid of the great bugbear—reform. 'No, my lords,' he said, 'the government succeeding us under such circumstances would be one far less auspicious to your lordships than the present: you would be compelled to grant a measure of reform, compared with which this we now proffer to you would be moderation: remember the often-quoted story of the Sibyl and her oracles, and learn from it the value of time taken by the forelock. You are the highest judicial authority in the realm; and it is the first duty of judges never to decide in any, even in the most trifling cause, without hearing everything that can be given in evidence respecting it: do not then decide the great cause of a nation's hopes and fears without a hearing: beware of your decision; rouse not the spirit of a peace-loving, but determined people; alienate not the affections of a great empire from your body. As your friend, as the friend of my country, as the servant of my sovereign, I counsel you to assist us with all your efforts in preserving national peace, and perpetuating national

prosperity: for all these reasons, I pray and beseech you not to reject this bill; I call on you by all you hold most dear, by all that binds every one of us to our common order and our common country, unless you are prepared to say that you will admit of no reform, and are resolved against any change, I solemnly adjure you, yea, even on bended knees, my lords (here the chancellor slightly bent his knee on the woolsack) I implore you, not to reject this bill!

Lord Lyndhurst followed, and complained of the manner in which the opposition, of which he formed a part, had been treated, both in and out of that house, as supporters of old and obsolete prejudices, or even as men influenced by sordid and personal motives: but if they did err, they erred under very high authority; the battle they were now fighting, the language they now held, the principles they were now advocating, had been fought, upheld, and advocated by the greatest statesmen and the most profound philosophers that had ever taken part in any discussion: passing, however, over the dead, he would come to the living; and in vindication of the error committed by the opponents of this bill, if error it was, he would appeal to the authority of some of the noble lords who were now its supporters. Here his lordship mentioned earl Grey, as having, till the present occasion, always limited his views to a gradual reform; he appealed also to the nominal author of the bill, lord J. Russell, as having hitherto professed the same moderate sentiments; and, lastly, he quoted, to the same purpose, a letter written by the chancellor, when Mr. Brougham; in which he stated, 'above all things, that disfranchisement formed no part of his plan of reform.' This produced an interruption on the part of the lord chancellor, who said, that the letter referred to had been stolen from his private depository by one of his servants, who sold it to a newspaper; in consequence of which, an injunction from the court of chancery had been obtained, to prevent its circulation. Lord Lyndhurst, after this explanation, proceeded to state what would be the effects of the bill, if brought into operation: first, the destruction of the Irish protestant church; next, a general confiscation of ecclesiastical property in both nations; after which, the rights and privileges of their lordships would be trampled in the dust, together with the liberties of their country. The archbishop of Canterbury, in a speech of great moderation, justified the vote he intended to give against a measure, which he thought mischievous in its tendency, and dangerous

to the fabric of our constitution. The duke of Sussex, on the contrary, thought it would add to our prosperity, and secure tranquillity, order, and peace in the empire. The duke of Gloucester was not averse to a safe constitutional plan, for the correction of such abuses as might have crept into the system: this, however, was not a measure of reform, but a new invention, which would lead to the destruction of our most valued institutions. After some observations from several other peers, earl Grey replied to the leading arguments urged against the bill; and finally declared, that 'he would not abandon the king, to whom he was bound by obligations of gratitude, greater perhaps than any subject ever owed to a sovereign, for the kind manner in which he had extended to him confidence and support; as well as for the indulgence with which he had accepted his offers and best endeavors to serve the throne: place was not sought by him; but it had been offered under such circumstances, that nothing but a sense of duty could have induced him to accept it: he had performed that duty to the utmost of his power, and would continue to do so; but if parliament and the nation should withdraw their confidence from him, and he could no longer be a useful servant to his majesty, he would resign office, and carry with him into retirement the consciousness of having done his best to serve his king and country.' The house at a quarter past six on Saturday morning, divided; and the amendment, 'that the bill should be read that day six months,' was carried against ministers, by a majority of forty-one.

When the public became acquainted with this decision, the intelligence produced an extraordinary sensation, and meetings were instantly convened in the metropolis: one was held at the Thatched-house tavern, consisting of all members who had supported the bill in its passage through the commons: with equal promptitude the common council assembled; and this was followed by a meeting, at the Mansion-house, of merchants and bankers; who passed resolutions, approving the conduct of government, and pledging themselves to its support: petitions also were carried to the king, praying him to continue his ministers, and have recourse to a new creation of peers, sufficient in numbers to carry the bill. On the ninth of October, lord Ebrington, in the commons, moved a resolution, declaratory of their unabated confidence in his majesty's ministers, and determination of adhering to the reform bill; and this, being carried by a majority of 131,

secured the continuance of earl Grey's administration: the two houses were occupied for several nights in desultory discussions on the state of public feeling, and the disturbances thence proceeding; but, on the twentieth, parliament was prorogued by the king in person; who, on his return to the palace, was accompanied with enthusiastic cheering like that which he received on his way to the house.

The rejection of the reform bill by the lords produced, as might have been expected, an ebullition of popular resentment throughout the kingdom: in London, the lord mayor and corporation went to St. James's with an address to the throne; and the civic procession was joined in its route by such numerous bodies with similar addresses, that before it reached the palace, it consisted of more than 50,000 persons: soon after their arrival, the parochial deputies waited on lord Melbourne, who prudently advised them to commit their addresses to the county members, for presentation that day at the levee: this was done, and announced to the multitude by Mr. Hume, who exhorted them to be firm, united, and peaceable; but to disperse immediately, and give no advantage to the enemies of reform: this salutary advice, however, was thrown away on the crowd, who commenced an attack on the mansions of the marquis of Bristol and duke of Wellington, the windows of which they intirely demolished. Being driven thence by the police, they re-assembled at the house of earl Dudley, which owed its safety to the same excellent establishment: vast numbers had collected in the Park, evidently waiting for the departure of such peers as were known to be anti-reformers; and the marquis of Londonderry, being recognised, was received with volleys of stones from which he suffered severely; but the duke of Cumberland was even dragged from his horse, and would probably have been sacrificed, if he had not been rescued by the police.

In the country, violence and outrage were at first confined to the counties of Derby and Nottingham; at the latter of which places, the mob set fire to the castle, the seat of the duke of Newcastle, the most hated of all tory leaders, and the head of borough proprietors. No one could suppose that the wishes or opinions of mobs like these were to be taken for a moment into account in the decision of a great political question; and in both houses of parliament ministers loudly expressed their disapprobation of such proceeding: but they were charged by their opponents with having indirectly en-

couraged riots by the language they had held, and the connexion in which they had placed themselves with large bodies of men acting illegally: certain it is, that while the bill was before the lords, a meeting of political unions took place at Birmingham, where, it was asserted, though undoubtedly with great exaggeration, that 150,000 persons were congregated together. This assembly voted an address to the king, setting forth their alarm 'at the awful consequences' which might arise from the failure of the bill; their pain at imagining it possible 'that the house of lords should be so infatuated as to reject it;' and their earnest desire that his majesty would create as many peers as might be necessary to ensure its success: in the speeches of several persons who harangued this meeting, the most violent doctrines were broached; and one of the resolutions agreed to, was a vote of thanks to lord Althorp and lord John Russell: this was acknowledged by those statesmen in terms which were considered too courteous toward such an illegal and dangerous association; as well as bearing too hard on that branch of the legislature, against which popular indignation was particularly directed.

The continuance of earl Grey in office, and his majesty's declaration, 'that he had the highest confidence in his ministry,' doubtless had a strong effect in preserving general tranquillity: still, as the year advanced, a spirit of insubordination seemed to increase: at Croydon, the archbishop of Canterbury was grossly insulted, while presiding over a meeting of the society for the propagation of the Gospel; in Somersetshire, the bishop of the diocese was rudely attacked, when engaged in the solemn ceremony of consecrating a new church; and several other obnoxious prelates were burned in effigy: these, however, were but trifles compared with the devastation committed at Bristol, when its recorder, sir Charles Wetherell, who had been the most furious opposer of reform in the house of commons, arrived there on the twenty-ninth of October, to discharge his official duties. Sir Charles, who had been received on his road from Bath with the execrations of an immense multitude, was attacked by so violent a mob at the Mansion-house, after he had opened his commission, that he was soon compelled to seek for safety by flight and in disguise: this, however, did not stop the outrages of the populace, indignant against the tory magistrates of their corporation, and unrestrained by the military force present, through the weak and vacillating conduct of its commander. Accordingly, the prisons, the episcopal palace, the Mansion-house, the Custom-house, the

Excise-office, with great part of Queen's-square, fell a sacrifice to the flames; also a large number of warehouses, many of which were filled with wine and spirits, shared in the conflagration; and Bristol presented a scene which could not have been exceeded by that which London exhibited during the riots of 1780: the soldiers, who had been sent out of the city, were now at length recalled; the magistrates brought out the *posse comitatus*; and as parties of cavalry, infantry, and artillery arrived, tranquillity was partially restored: the total number of killed and wounded, that were known, amounted nearly to 100; but about 200 were taken prisoners during the outrages, and several were afterwards captured with plundered property in their possession: almost two months, however, elapsed before a special commission was appointed to try the offenders; when eighty-one were convicted, and five left for execution; but four only suffered the extremity of the law. A military court of inquiry having been instituted on the conduct of the officers commanding at Bristol, the result was the appointment of a court-martial on colonel Brereton; but when it had sat four days, its proceedings were cut short by the death of the prisoner; who, being overcome by his feelings, and the weight of evidence against him, shot himself through the heart: another court-martial followed, on captain Warrington, senior officer of the third dragoon guards; whose defence for his neglect in suppressing the riots and preserving the buildings rested mainly on the want of directions from colonel Brereton, and of assistance from the city magistrates; the head of whom purposely concealed himself when his presence was most needed; whilst all the aldermen excused themselves for not accompanying the soldiers, by their inability to ride on horseback. General sir Charles Dalbiac, the crown prosecutor, laid down, on this occasion, the following doctrine as a fundamental principle of the common law:—‘that if the occasion demands immediate action, and no opportunity is given for procuring the advice or sanction of a magistrate, it is the duty of every subject to act on his own responsibility, in suppressing a riotous and tumultuous assembly; and whatever may be done by him honestly, in the execution of that object, he will be justified and supported by the common law: that law acknowledges no distinction between the private citizen and the soldier, who is still a citizen, lying under the same obligation, and invested with the same authority to preserve the king's peace, as any other subject.’ This was the doctrine of the great lord Mansfield, and it was now confirmed by the authority of lord chief

justice Tindal: yet it was vehemently attacked in the public prints as unconstitutional, and dangerous to the liberty of the subject!

About the time when such disgraceful scenes were passing at Bristol, some partial disturbances broke out at Bath, Coventry, and Worcester; but these, being vigorously opposed by the municipal and military powers, were speedily put down, without bloodshed, or any material destruction of property; in consequence, however, a proclamation was issued by his majesty in council, on the second of November, exhorting all classes of his subjects to unite in suppressing tumults: but, as the winter advanced, the alarm of the executive government increased; and apprehensions were entertained, lest the peace of the country should be seriously endangered by formidable associations, especially those in London, Birmingham, and Manchester; which began not only to use daring language, but to appoint councils and officers, and to assume a regular plan of organisation: the rapid increase of these unions, and the boldness of their proceedings, having at length made it necessary that some steps should be taken to lay them under restraint, the Gazette of the twenty-second of November contained a proclamation, declaring their illegality, and warning all subjects of the realm against entering into such combinations.

During this time, Ireland continued in a distracted state; associations under various appellations and pretexts of political discussion were promoted, and the passions of the people continually excited for repeal of the union by Mr. O'Connell: while counter-addresses and admonitory proclamations were issued by Mr. Stanley the Irish secretary, declaring that government, though it had no intention of suppressing a peaceful expression of public opinion at legal and constitutional assemblies, would guard against such abuse of them as might lead to the violation of the laws or breach of the public peace. At length the magistrates dispersed one of these meetings, and apprehended the great agitator, with his principal coadjutors, for illegal acts: true bills being found against them by the grand jury, Mr. O'Connell put in a demurrer; but withdrew it, and pleaded Not Guilty: after several attempts to delay the trial, he withdrew that plea also; and pleaded guilty to the first fourteen counts in the indictment, respecting the holding of meetings in contempt of proclamations: many were the discussions in parliament, whether government had made any compromise with the agitators, since none of them were brought up for judgment; but there is no reason to suppose that such

was the case, in opposition to the denial of ministers : that they were not so brought up, is sufficiently accounted for by the state both of England and Ireland. In the latter country, dreadful disturbances still continued, until the insurrection act was enforced by proclamation in several counties, and a special commission sent to try offenders : the refusal to pay tithes now became general ; and many frightful collisions occurred between the peasantry and the authorities which endeavored to repress their outrages ; midnight violence, incendiarism, and other acts of atrocity increased ; so that many of the gentry fled from their homes, and took refuge in Limerick or Dublin ; while those that remained were obliged to barricade their houses, and keep guard day and night : some persons of high respectability withdrew altogether from Ireland, transferring their families and property to Great Britain. At this time also alarming accounts were received from our West India colonies, particularly Antigua, where an insurrection of the negroes broke out, through a suppression of the Sunday market without an equivalent to the slaves ; nor could tranquillity be restored without military aid, and the execution of several ringleaders. At Barbadoes and other islands an idea prevailed among the slave population, that although the British king and parliament had declared them free, liberty was still withheld from them by their owners.

Contemporaneously with the tumultuous proceedings above described, the nation was this year visited by Asiatic cholera ; which frightful malady, first appearing in 1817 on the banks of the Ganges, gradually advanced to the northern shores of Great Britain, and reached them in the month of October this year : before the close of which, it found its way from Sunderland and Newcastle to the suburbs of the metropolis ; where, for a time, its outrages were generally confined to the victims of intemperance and vice : but it soon began to attack patients of all descriptions, and to spread from the capital into the provinces ; so that scarcely any part of the empire escaped this dreadful scourge : its inflictions, however, by reason probably of the habits of the people and the nature of the climate, were less violent than in any other nation which it visited. A board of health was established, which made a daily report of cases, but was remarkable for the variety of opinions which it elicited from medical practitioners ; the main points controverted being, whether the disease was contagious or not—whether it was the Indian cholera, or a new complaint—whether imported, or indigenous—whether it partook of the properties of the plague,

or was to be regarded as a transient evil. The proportion of deaths was found to be about one to three; but the remarkable freedom of some places from this malady in the neighborhood of its ravages, occasioned many to conceive that its propagation was extended by currents in the air.

In France also this year was distinguished by tumults; especially at Lyons, where disturbances among the workmen advanced to such a height, that the duke of Orleans, with a large military force, was despatched thither, accompanied by marshal Soult, the war minister, invested with extraordinary powers to quell the revolt. In the Netherlands, after prince Leopold had accepted the crown, Holland declared the existing armistice at an end: a Dutch army entered Belgium, and attacked Leopold's troops at Hasselt and Louvain; which latter city it captured, but was obliged to retire before a large French force: but these marches of the Dutch and French troops became a subject of debate, in consequence of which the latter were recalled: another set of articles was then framed by the conference, which declared that the acceptance of them should be compulsory: they were readily accepted by Belgium, but rejected by Holland, whose offers to negotiate were in turn rejected; after which, a treaty was signed between the five powers and Leopold, who was recognised by them as king of Belgium: against this instrument the Dutch plenipotentiaries protested; feeling a certainty of being secretly backed in their pretensions by some of the contracting powers, and supported by a strong party, even in Great Britain; nor were they deceived in their expectations.

In Spain insurrections were followed by defeats, arrests, and executions; while the hopes of the Portuguese constitutionalists revived, when Don Pedro, abdicating the Brazillian throne in favor of his son, returned to Europe, and made preparations for a descent on Portugal. The state of Brunswick saw, not an abdication, but an expulsion, of its despotic ruler by his subjects; who, by this act, only anticipated a sentence of the Germanic diet, declaring his despotism and appointing his brother to the sovereignty. Revolutionary symptoms also manifested themselves in Hanover, where the university of Gottingen, long noted for its republican principles, spread abroad doctrines calculated to excite insurrection, and at length proceeded to such lengths that the governor-general was obliged to use military aid, suspend the university, dismiss the students, and imprison two of the factious professors: these measures having had the desired effect, the college soon after-

wards resumed its academical functions. In Parma, Modena, and the papal states, insurrections were put down by Austrian interference, and every species of cruelty was put in practice by the old governments when restored. Greece, for whose pacification the powers of Europe had labored so long, was now the scene of a civil war: the popularity of the president Capo d'Istria, either from his too great attachment to Russian interests, or from the jealousy and discontent of the chiefs, unused to control and eager for power, had rapidly declined: he became suspicious and tyrannical; inflicted arbitrary punishments more like the despotic deputy of Russia than the elected head of a free state; and, before the year closed, lost his life by assassination. But of all people, the fate of the Poles was most calculated to excite commiseration: driven to insurrection by the faithless and tyrannical conduct of Nicholas, betrayed by France, deserted by England, and persecuted in their low estate by Austria and Prussia, they fell after an heroic struggle: Warsaw was taken, and the Polish armies disbanded; the nobles were degraded; women of the highest rank were subjected to violation by the common soldiers; and thousands of every rank, age, and sex, were driven by the whips of Cossacks into a Siberian exile, despoiled of their property, clothed in sackcloth, and tortured by the most cruel punishments: thus their nationality was destroyed, as far as human ingenuity could destroy it, for ever.

The British parliament did not re-assemble till the sixth of December, when the king went in state to the house of peers, and delivered an elaborate speech; in the course of which he recommended to them 'a speedy and satisfactory settlement of the reform question, which became daily of more pressing importance to the security of the state, as well as to the contentment and welfare of the people.' But to effect this, a new bill became necessary, which was accordingly introduced on the twelfth of the same month by lord John Russell, with some improvements both in the process of disfranchisement and in the qualification of electors; while an objection, which had been previously raised against the population census of 1821, was obviated by that of the present year being adopted.⁹ The new bill was again subjected to a fiery ordeal: its democratic

⁹ In 1821, the population of England was 11,261,437; of Wales, 717,438; of Scotland, 2,093,456; in 1831, England, 13,089,338; Wales, 805,236; Scotland, 2,365,807. Summary of Great Britain, in 1821, 14,391,631; in 1831, 16,537,398; being an increase of fifteen per cent.

influence was strongly condemned, and an amendment was moved by lord Porchester, seconded by sir Edward Sugden, who started a frivolous objection unworthy of his high reputation. 'On that part of the bill regulating the right of voting in boroughs and cities,' he observed, 'there must be an annual valuation of every house in England, which would furnish an excellent trade to surveyors; since there was nothing more changeable in value than this sort of property.' After urging several other technical frivolities of the same kind, without attacking the grand principle of the measure, he remarked, that its true title was—'a bill to encourage the growth of ten pound houses in England.' Mr. Macaulay, however, entered into an elaborate defence of the plan, without noticing these particular objections made against its details: and concluded with a bold declaration,—that, 'by fair means or foul, either through parliament or over parliament, the question of reform must be carried: therefore,' said, he, 'throw open the gates to an enemy, that can force an entrance through the breach: show that our constitution, though not exempt from the defects which time must produce in every human work, possesses within itself the power of self-reparation; and let that end, which was sought too often by a savage revolution, be gained by a peaceful and tranquil reform.' Mr. Croker made a desultory harangue, for the purpose of attacking ministers on the subject of the late disturbances, and the dangers still menacing the kingdom; all of which he attributed to their conduct; calling them 'the servants of a faction whom they dared not to disobey:' in reply, lord Althorp said, 'it was idle to assert that this bill was the first link in a chain of disturbance: clamor had existed long ago, and had constantly increased, until it was raised to an irrepressible height by the declaration of the late administration.' An adjournment took place to the following evening; when, after explanations by the noble mover, and a vindication both of the original measure and its subsequent alterations, by Mr. Stanley; together with an harangue in a mingled strain of argument and sarcasm by sir C. Wetherell, and a solemn protest from sir R. Peel against so great and precipitate an alteration of the best constitution recorded in history, a division took place at half-past one on Sunday morning; when there appeared, for the second reading of the bill 334, and against it 162; the majority in favor of ministers being just two to one: the house then adjourned to the seventeenth of January following.

Thus stood this great political question; with a certain

prospect of success in the commons, though various opinions were formed respecting its treatment by the lords: meanwhile, public journals and political associations loudly demanded an immediate increase of the peerage, in order to force the bill through the upper house; and though, at any other time, and under any other circumstances, the very suggestion of such a measure would have raised a violent outcry, in the present case both the king and his ministers were exposed to severe attacks for delaying to gratify the popular wish.

When parliament met on the seventeenth of January, ministers expressed an intention of going into committee upon the reform bill on the twentieth; which proposition was resisted by Messrs. Croker and Goulburn, as bringing the house into a consideration of details before they had received that information, without which no proper judgment could be formed: lord John Russell, however, and lord Althorp would not consent to any delay; and the bill was accordingly pushed into committee, where its details were attacked by Mr. Croker, sir R. Peel, sir R. Vyvyan, and many others, with as much hostility as they had shown to the general plan: in particular, the clause which proposed to confer eight additional members on the metropolitan districts, met with violent opposition. The marquis of Chandos, after contending that to extend the elective franchise in that quarter would lead to great excitement, and give to the capital a preponderating influence over the rest of the country, moved an amendment against the clause; in favor of which there appeared 236 votes in a house of 552 members; leaving a majority for ministers of eighty.

It would be a tedious task to pursue the progress of this bill through the commons: it got out of committee about the middle of March; and on the nineteenth of that month lord J. Russell moved its third reading: this being opposed by lord Mahon, who proposed, as an amendment, that the bill be read that day six months, a warm debate ensued, which was continued on the twentieth and twenty-second: the arguments used were the same which had been so often repeated in the house; and several members declared, that although the bill had not come out of the committee with all the improvements which they had desired and expected, they would still vote for its third reading, because they believed that a rejection would now produce greater mischief than any which could arise from its provisions: the division gave to ministers a clear majority of 116 in a house of 594 members. On the twenty-third, the measure was passed; an amendment, which went to raise the

qualification to twenty pounds in Liverpool, and all new boroughs returning two members, having been negatived without a division.

On Monday, March the twenty-sixth, the reform bill was carried to the upper house by lords Russell and Althorp, accompanied by an unusual number of members; when the chancellor, who announced to their lordships the message of the commons, immediately read the title of the bill with peculiar emphasis. The most important part of its reception consisted in the speeches of lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe, who had led the opposition last session, and now announced their intention to vote for the second reading; induced probably to take this course by a desire to save the respectability of their house from the intrusion of a band of political agents, formed into peers, to serve a temporary purpose: the bishop of London also was so impressed with the dangers hanging over the country, that he resolved to follow this example, to the astonishment of the duke of Wellington and the marquis of Londonderry, who declared their opinions to be unchanged, and their hostility undiminished. Previously to the second reading, the duke of Buckingham gave notice, that if there should be, as he trusted there would be, a majority against it, he would bring in, after the Easter recess, a bill for the purpose of giving members to large towns, whose importance intitled them to representation; also joining and consolidating certain boroughs, each of which now returned two members to parliament, in order to make room for the new representatives, and prevent any man from being deprived of his existing rights; whilst a third provision would be to extend the elective franchise, so as to prevent its abuse in boroughs: in proof of the sincerity of his intentions, his grace moved the insertion of this notice on the journals of the house.

At six o'clock, earl Grey rose to move the second reading of the ministerial bill, which he did in a speech courteous and conciliatory, though not destitute of firmness. After briefly mentioning its important nature, its interesting object, the large majority that had sent it up, and the unequivocal support it had received from the people, he adverted to the duke of Buckingham's notice of motion: this, he said, relieved him from any necessity of defending the principle of his own bill; for it appeared now to be universally conceded: he was not called on to except even the duke of Wellington; since his grace's last declaration on the subject admitted that some degree of reform was necessary. The noble earl then pro-

ceeded to notice the alterations introduced, defended the ten-pound qualification from some objections raised against it, and concluded with an affecting appeal to their lordships respecting the unjust attacks made on him, for having proposed a measure, which in his opinion was required by the duty which he owed to his sovereign and his country ; a measure, now generally admitted, in its principle, as necessary ; while the only difference existing regarded its extent. Disclaiming all notion of advising their lordships to yield to intimidation, he could not help calling their attention to that awful silence of the people, now prevailing, and taking place of the outcry which first marked the progress of this bill ; a silence which might perhaps lead some to imagine that they were not viewing the measure with the same feelings of interest : but he cautioned their lordships against forming such an opinion : ‘ for,’ said he, ‘ though the people are silent, they are looking at our proceedings this night no less intensely than they have looked ever since the question was first agitated. I know it is pretended by many, that the nation has no confidence in the peers ; because there is an opinion out of doors, that the interests of the aristocracy are separated from those of the people : on the part of this house, however, I disclaim all such separation of interests ; and therefore I am willing to believe, that the silence, of which I have spoken, is the fruit of a latent hope still existing in their bosoms.’

Lord Ellenborough then rose ; and, after a vehement attack on the whole bill, moved, as an amendment, ‘ that it be read a second time that day six months.’ This gave rise to a very animated debate ; which, being adjourned to the next day, was re-opened by the earl of Shrewsbury ; who declared himself at a loss to know from what evils the constitution, of which some persons appeared so enamored, had saved the country : we had had expensive wars ; we had £800,000,000 of debt ; we had had rebellion and revolution, with great and frequent commercial embarrassments ; and we now saw the strange picture of an intelligent, active population, idle and starving in the midst of abundance. The only way to test the value of our constitution, was to adopt a measure which would give its merits fair play : by passing the bill before the house, their lordships would restore their connexion with the people, and their power of doing good ; the only power which they ought to covet : they must either consent to right the people, or the people would right themselves. After thus expressing himself respecting the state to which ‘ the rule of a dominant oligarchy had brought the country,

and against which the exasperated nation had at length risen,' his lordship declared, that in all things, that oligarchy had found on the episcopal bench willing coadjutors. 'But if the clergy,' said he, 'know their own interest (and it is generally supposed they are not unskilled in matters of personal concern), they ought to feel the necessity of now coming forward to do their duty by the country: hitherto they have shown themselves too often the greatest enemies of the people; willing agents of the worst system of tyranny; ready abettors of, and participators in, the vilest acts of extravagance, spoliation, and corruption: now is the time for them to make some compensation to the people for long years of contumely and wrong. After several observations on the more dignified attitude which the adversaries of the bill would take by boldly opposing it *in limine*, than by stooping to the subtle and desultory warfare which they were about to commence, the noble earl declared, 'that he would not mince matters; if the house of commons needed reform, so did the house of peers, to prevent the danger of continual collision, and to secure that unity of action, which was essential to the right management of the national affairs.'

Few addresses occasioned a greater ferment in the house than this, in which the earl of Limerick saw the early fruits of catholic emancipation: little did he expect so soon to find one of the first catholic peers in the realm pronouncing a philippic, not only against the existence of that house, but against everything which had existed for the last century. The earl of Mansfield and the duke of Wellington reprobated the bill in the most unmeasured terms; and not the bill only, but 'the waverers' also; who were accused of deserting their banners by voting for a second reading: but lords Harrowby and Wharncliffe ably defended themselves on this point, and a second adjournment took place.

The earl of Winchelsea, in opening the debate next day, spoke with great indignation against an augmentation of the peerage; declaring that if such a measure were adopted, he would no longer sit in the house, but would retire, and 'bide his time, till the return of those good days, which would enable him to vindicate the insulted laws of his country, by bringing an unconstitutional minister before the bar of his peers.' He was followed by the duke of Buckingham, who asserted, 'that the pestilence of the cholera was nothing in comparison with the contamination to which this bill would subject the constitution.' It was also opposed by the earl of Falmouth, the marquis of Bristol and the bishops of Lincoln

and Exeter; who were answered by the lords Radnor and Lansdowne, as well as by the bishops of London and Llandaff. An adjournment was then moved by lord Kenyon.

The debate on Thursday evening was resumed by lord Wynford; after whom lord Durham rose, and, in a state of high excitement, gave utterance to what was perhaps the most powerful speech made by any member of either house, in favor of the bill. The excitement alluded to arose from a passage in the bishop of Exeter's speech, where, descanting on the tone and temper of the press, he spoke of certain articles in the *Times* journal, as 'breathing the inspiration of the treasury.' After complimenting the learned lord who had spoken last, in having adopted a tone free from party asperity, and rancorous animosity against his majesty's ministers, very different from that of a right reverend prelate who spoke last night;¹¹ he observed:—'Of that exhibition I shall only say, that if coarse and virulent invective, malignant and false insinuations, the grossest perversion of historical facts, decked out with all the choicest flowers of pamphleteering slang——' Here the noble lord was called to order, and the earl of Winchelsea moved, that the words 'false insinuations,' and 'pamphleteering slang,' should be taken down. After some observations from earl Grey, lord Holland, and the duke of Buckingham, lord Durham went on to state, that he had not the slightest objection to his words being taken down: he would not stop to inquire whether they were the most elegant which he could have used, or quite suitable to the noble earl's taste; but they were the only words which could describe correctly the right reverend prelate's speech. 'With regard to retracting them,' he said, 'in obedience to the noble duke, I must observe, that, from the terms in which the right reverend prelate couched his insinuations, I could have no doubt that he alluded to me; since the same charge has been made in those weekly publications which are notorious for scurrility and indecency: when therefore I found the charge repeated here, in terms which could not be misunderstood, I determined to take the earliest opportunity of stating to your lordships, that it was as false as scandalous: I now repeat that declaration; and I pause, to give any noble lord the opportunity of taking down my words.'

Lord Durham then resumed his seat for a moment; but as no one rose, he proceeded to observe, that, as it appeared that no farther interruption was to be offered him, he would dismiss

¹¹ The bishop of Exeter.

the subject; while he trusted, that, if he had expressed himself with too much warmth, their lordships would reflect, that to all the tortures of a mind afflicted by domestic loss, had been of late superadded calumnies of the basest description; calculated to wound, not only his own feelings, but those of all most dear to him. Returning, however, to the question, he asserted, that the supporters of the bill had been charged by a noble duke and earl (Wellington and Mansfield), with having created an excitement in the public mind which led to that general demand for reform, now admitted to prevail by many who formerly denied its existence. 'On what facts,' he said, 'these noble lords found their assertions, I cannot comprehend: if there be any subject which, more than others, has been discussed, both in and out of parliament, especially within the last fifty years, it is that of a reform in the representation of the people: ever since our revolution it has been advocated by the most eminent men which this country can boast: from the year 1783, when the celebrated Yorkshire petition was presented, it has never been lost sight of by the people; though taken up with more or less energy, according to the circumstances of the times.' He then enumerated the distinguished characters who had patronised this measure; and declared, that the noble and gallant duke was not supported by facts, in saying that the feeling was one of late growth; still less, when he ascribed it to the examples of recent revolutions in France and Belgium: that it had assumed a much more formidable appearance within the last four or five years, he (lord Durham) did not deny; but this was owing, in a great measure, to repeated refusals to grant elective privileges to the large towns of Leeds, Manchester, and Birmingham, when fitting opportunities presented themselves; it had arisen also from the exposures which had taken place through parliamentary inquiries relative to Grampound, Penryn, and East Retford, laying bare scenes of the grossest political profligacy and corruption: but above all, it had proceeded from that great multitude, the middle classes, having identified themselves with this question;—classes, whose emancipation alone would account for the intensity of feeling with which the measure had been received; while it demonstrated the improbability of the country being satisfied with less reform than that afforded by this bill.

His lordship then proceeded to show, that, up to the revolution of 1688, the object of each successive struggle had been to prevent the sovereign from obtaining despotic power. At

that period the crown was defeated, and has ever since been dependent on, and at the mercy of, two parties, among the higher orders: between them the contest for political power has been bitter and incessant; while the country has been well or ill governed, according to the principles of that party which predominated: for a long time people acquiesced in the supremacy of the higher orders, and their exclusive possession of political privileges; but within the last fifty years a great change had taken place in the state of society, whose two extremes had been gradually meeting; the one standing still, while the other was gradually approaching it, and rendering itself competent to the discharge of higher duties: thus the people had naturally become desirous of political privileges; and the result of their continued exclusion must be a political convulsion, necessarily a destructive one; as it would arise from the unnatural compression of great power by insufficient means.

He next went into the question of the right or propriety, with which the middle classes claimed such privileges; in opposition to the noble duke, who had described them as paupers or beggars: so far from this, their wealth doubled or trebled that of the higher orders; and, as for their intelligence, he directed attention to the great commercial towns, with their literary societies, scientific institutions, and all other associations, tending to the advancement of the human race: by the example and purse of the middle classes were these supported and maintained; while the gentry, living apart, enjoyed merely the amusements and luxuries peculiar to their own order; so that, whenever they were brought together on public occasions, their superiority in learning or intellect was no longer apparent.

Such being the case, his lordship asked, whether that was a fit and proper state of the constitution, which excluded from the enjoyment of political privileges and power, a large body of men, possessed of talents, skill, and wealth, merely because they did not happen to be included in a particular class, endowed with privileges granted in different times and different circumstances? Again, did the working of the constitution, in its present exclusive state, produce no other mischievous effects, beside their exclusion? Did those persons who virtually represented them perform the duties of their trust advantageously for the country? The answer of the people had always been in the negative; and for the correctness of that assertion, he declared, that he could accumulate proofs

on proofs; but a few would suffice. When this corrupt parliamentary system first came into operation, after the revolution, the national debt amounted to £16,000,000: at the end of the last war it reached near £800,000,000! while the national expenditure had, during that time, increased from £5,500,000 to more than £94,000,000; and the poor-rates from £1,000,000 to £7,000,000. In a single reign only, that of George III. £27,000,000 had been lavished in subsidies to the great continental powers; and in that same period our naval and military expenditure amounted to £928,000,000; so that the luxury of indulging in war cost this country a sum little short of one thousand millions.

All these proofs of unlimited and unchecked expenditure, with many others, became known to the people at the end of the war: great distress followed; much discontent and loud complaints prevailed: and how were they met? By conciliation or concession? No, truly; but by every species of repressive and coercive enactment: measures to prevent public meetings for petition, to fetter the press, to suspend the habeas corpus act, and to grant indemnity bills, were proposed and adopted by the house of commons: 'those proceedings,' said his lordship, 'seem, if I may judge from their cheers, to be approved by the noble lords opposite: they were not, however; I can assure them, grateful to the people; who, seeing their liberties attacked, and their resources squandered, through the instrumentality of a house which was theoretically the guardians of them, naturally turned attention to the mode of electing that house, which neither represented their feelings nor protected their interests. The picture then presented to view was no less startling and disgusting than that of our finances, which I have just alluded to: they found one portion nominated by peers; a second, by commoners; a third, by trafficking attorneys, selling seats to the highest bidder; a fourth, indebted for its return to the most unblushing bribery and corruption; in one part of the empire, a park, with no population, or at least one of the smallest kind, returning two members; in another, a town inhabited by hundreds of thousands, yet without any representation at all; and even that small part of the house which was still dependent on the public voice, so fettered and circumscribed by the immense expenditure required, as to be virtually placed in the hands of a very small class. My lords, all this led to a state of things which has been so prophetically and accurately described by a celebrated writer, whose opinions are generally pleasing to

noble lords, that I make no apology for substituting his glowing words for my feeble expressions: this led, to use the language of Mr. Burke, to 'an addressing house of commons, and a petitioning nation; a house full of confidence, when the nation was plunged in despair; in full harmony with ministers, whom the people regarded with abhorrence; which voted thanks, when public opinion called on them for retrenchment: eager to grant, when the general voice demanded account; which, in all disputes between the people and the administration, presumed against the people, and punished their disorders, but refused to inquire into the provocations given them: this led to so unnatural and monstrous a state of things; to an assembly, which may be a great, and wise, and awful senate; but not to any popular purpose a house of commons."

Lord Durham concluded this able and spirited address, by stating his opinion, that he had shown sufficient reasons for the prevalent desire of reform, without ascribing its origin to ministerial instigation, or to those French and Belgian revolutions, which haunted the imagination of the noble and gallant duke opposite: he also asserted that the British revolution of 1641, the French revolution of 1793, and the loss of our American colonies, might all have been averted by wise and timely concession: after investigating these positions, he asked noble lords, who talked of resistance, whether they had calculated the comparative amount of force arrayed on each side? on one, the crown, the house of commons, and the people; on the other, about 200 peers: he then warned them of the danger which they might incur from excommunication by their fellow-countrymen; asking, whether they were prepared to live solitary in the midst of multitudes; their mansions fortified with cannon (as was lately that of the duke of Newcastle) and protected by troops, perhaps of faithful, but in the hour of danger, useless retainers? 'Surely,' said he, 'there must be something in this state of things most revolting to the habits and feelings of a British peer: yet these are the most favorable circumstances which can follow the rejection of this bill.' After contrasting the change between confidence and distrust, affection and hatred, as well as predicting the little advantage or consolation they would find in the temporary preservation of nomination boroughs, coupled with the dislike and aversion of their fellow-citizens, his lordship declared, it was under a conviction that the claims of the people were not to be trifled with, that he and his colleagues came to the resolution of

framing such a measure, as might not only give general satisfaction, but set the question intirely at rest.

He was followed by the earl of Caernarvon, lords Eldon, Tenterden, and Lyndhurst, against the bill, as well as by the bishops of Rochester and Gloucester; the latter of whom took occasion to animadvert, with pointed, but just severity, on the attack which had been made by the catholic earl of Shrewsbury on the ecclesiastical bench. 'He has invited us,' said the right reverend prelate, 'to vote for the bill, because it will conduce to our own advantage: adding, that the clergy were specially noted for an attention to their own interests. If he meant, as I suppose he did, our own private and personal interests, I reject the imputation with unutterable scorn: if he meant our regard for the interests of the church, then the clergy had, on this question, no interest distinct from the general weal.' With regard to the charges of profligacy in their political conduct, made against the bishops, as 'abettors of tyranny and oppression,' 'willing instruments of rapine and extortion,' he called on the noble earl, in the face of the house and of the country, either to abandon or to make them good: 'if he refuses,' said his lordship, 'to accept one of these alternatives, his long line of ancestry will not save him from disgrace. The schemes of oppression by James II., our last tyrant, no doubt had abettors: who they were I shall not say; but at all events, they were not protestant bishops: the first resistance made to that tyrant was among the clergy of the church of England, who opposed his oppressive system at the risk of liberty and life: though I wish not to detract from the glory of the ancestors of noble lords in this house, who joined in the expulsion of the tyrant; yet I can appeal to history in proof of the fact,—that but for the resistance of the protestant clergy throughout this country, the efforts of those distinguished persons might have failed; and the house of Brunswick, to which we owe our liberties, might have moved but little beyond a German principality.' After lord Goderich and the chancellor had each spoken in favor of the bill, earl Grey commenced his reply at five o'clock on Friday morning; in the course of which he noticed with great severity an attack made on him by the bishop of Exeter. 'The right reverend prelate,' said he, 'threw out insinuations about my ambition: let me tell him calmly, that the pulses of ambition may beat as strongly under sleeves of lawn, as under an ordinary habit.' Before he concluded, he would take leave to say one word on a question which had been frequently discussed out of doors,

and in which he was in some degree personally concerned ;— he alluded to the probable creation of peers : all the best constitutional writers admitted, that although the creation of a large number of peers, for a particular object, was a measure which should rarely be resorted to ; yet, in some cases, such as to avoid a collision between the two houses, it might be absolutely necessary : it was true, he had been, for many reasons, exceedingly averse to such a scheme ; but he believed it would be found, that in a case of necessity, like that which he had stated, a creation of peers would be perfectly justifiable, and in accordance with the acknowledged principles of our constitution : more than this he would not say at present. After a short explanation from lord Caernarvon and the bishop of Exeter, the house divided ; when the absolute majority for ministers was only nine ; and the bill, having been read a second time, was ordered to be committed on the first day after the recess.

The lords broke up for the Easter holidays on the seventeenth of April, and the commons the day following : but on the sixteenth, the duke of Wellington thought proper to enter on the journals a protest, which embodied the principal objections urged against the measure ; more especially its violation of chartered rights, and its introduction of an exorbitant degree of democratic influence into the constitution : this was signed by seventy-four other peers, including the dukes of Cumberland and Gloucester, with six prelates ; but not by lord Lyndhurst.

Parliament stood adjourned to the seventh of May ; and the interval was a period memorable in our annals. The associations and political unions throughout the kingdom were instantly on the alert, being tremblingly alive for the fate of the bill, on account of the small majority by which the second reading was carried : the people of Leeds were first in the field, and called a meeting on the nineteenth of April ; when a number of able speeches were delivered, and an energetic address was voted to his majesty, whom they designated as ‘ their sheet-anchor—their refuge in the storm : ’ the last necessity was said to be at hand, and a creation of peers was earnestly implored : at Birmingham, a special meeting of its political union was held on the twenty-seventh, Thomas Attwood, esq. in the chair ; when a series of resolutions passed ; in consequence of which, a general meeting of all the associations from surrounding districts in the counties of Warwick, Worcester, and Stafford was convened, on the seventh of May, at the foot of

Newhall-hill; forming such an assemblage as perhaps this country never before witnessed: the grand northern division alone was estimated at near 100,000 people; its procession extending four miles, with 150 banners and eleven bands of music: upwards of 200 bands were in attendance, and more than 700 banners waved over the assembled throng. At half-past twelve the commencement of proceedings was announced by the sound of a bugle; and after many energetic speeches, a petition to the house of lords was carried, 'imploping them not to drive to despair a high-minded, generous, and fearless people; nor to urge them on, by a rejection of their claims, to demands of a much more extensive nature; but rather to pass the reform bill into a law, unimpaired in any of its great parts and provisions; more especially uninjured in the clauses relating to the ten-pound franchise.'

The council of the Birmingham Union now declared its sittings permanent, until the fate of the bill should be decided. Similar meetings were held, about the same time, at Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Paisley, Dundee, &c. as well as throughout the south of England; at all of which resolutions were agreed to, expressing unabated confidence in earl Grey and his colleagues; while petitions were drawn up to the king and house of lords, beseeching them to pass the bill unmutilated: the meeting at Edinburgh is said to have consisted of 50,000 persons, being held in the king's park, near Holyrood-house; from the windows of which the exiled sovereign of France might have witnessed another specimen of the working of that spirit which he had vainly attempted to extinguish.

In the metropolis an extraordinary assembly of members of the National Union took place, on the third of May, Joseph Hume, esq. in the chair; when various resolutions were carried, all urging the necessity of the bill being passed without alteration; while a petition to the lords stated, that in case of its mutilation or rejection, 'there was reason to expect that the payment of taxes would cease; that other social obligations would be disregarded; and that the ultimate consequence might be the utter extinction of privileged orders.' Such was the position of the country, when parliament re-assembled on the seventh of May; and the house of lords went into committee on that bill which had created so extraordinary a sensation.

The anti-reformers lost no time in unmasking their batteries, after lord Grey had first moved the adoption of the disfran-

chising clause, relating to schedule A; proposing that the number fifty-six should not be specified, but that their lordships should come to a successive vote on each individual borough, as part of the clause: this he thought the best method of obviating objections which had been made to the clause as it now stood. Lord Lyndhurst then rose, and suggested, that it would be still more convenient to postpone all consideration of the first, as well as of the second clause, for the purpose of taking into consideration the boroughs and places to be enfranchised; a matter, which, in his opinion, ought to be discussed, before they entered on the question of disfranchisement: and this would involve nothing like a prejudgment of those clauses; for the house would reserve itself for the consideration of them, unprejudiced and unfettered, precisely as if they had not been postponed at all: he recommended such a mode of proceeding, because a bill of this kind ought to be essentially a bill of enfranchisement; of which principle disfranchisement ought only to be a consequence: the amendment was supported by lords Harrowby, Wharncliffe, Winchelsea, Ellenborough, the duke of Wellington, &c., on the ground that its object was not to defeat schedules A and B. Several noble lords thought it expedient to enter on a rather suspicious defence of their character for integrity and fair dealing, before it was called in question; but the duke of Newcastle honestly avowed that he supported the amendment, as he would support any other measure likely to frustrate the bill: the manœuvre, however, was quickly seen through, and exposed by the lord chancellor and earl Grey; the former of whom declared, that although a proposal had been made to omit all mention of the number of places to be disfranchised, this had not the slightest connexion with any intention of diminishing the number itself: the latter observed, that nothing could have been better devised to defeat the bill than the proposed amendment, which, if it were carried, he should consider fatal to the whole measure: he well knew, that opposition lords, if they could delay matters until they had silenced the clamors of Manchester and other large places, would venture on the rescue of some of their favorite boroughs; especially as they expected to win over to their side all the scot and lot voters: when the house divided, ministers were left in a minority of thirty-five; the votes for lord Lyndhurst's amendment being 151, and those against it 116; on which, earl Grey moved, that all farther consideration of the bill be deferred till Thursday the tenth. Lord Ellenborough, having expressed his regret that ministers should thus

interpose delay, took the opportunity of detailing those amendments or mutilations of the bill, which his party, after serious consideration intended to propose: these consisted in a disfranchisement of 113 boroughs, their privileges to be distributed among other places; a prohibition of persons to vote for counties, in respect of property situated in boroughs; the adoption of a more clear and certain mode of ascertaining the genuineness and value of holdings; and the retention, not only of the ten-pound qualification, but that of scot and lot where it already existed. Here was a measure, of which one half, proposed at the time when East Retford was disfranchised, would have kept the tories in power, and satisfied the nation: but lord Grey now felt himself justified in considering it as an insidious proposition, and safe in treating it with scorn; while the people, instead of being divided by the artifice, expressed generally a contempt for its authors.

Implicit reliance being placed on the king's firmness, an immediate creation of peers was confidently expected: on the eighth, ministers came to the unanimous resolution of pressing this measure; and when the cabinet had broken up, earl Grey and the lord chancellor proceeded instantly to Windsor: the king, however, hesitated, on account of the great number requisite, and the danger of such a precedent; nor can there be a doubt, but that the royal mind was perplexed by the reasonings and inflexible opposition of the tory peers; while he stood nearly alone, amidst his own family and court, in countenancing any part of the reform bill. Ministers requested, in the event of his majesty's resolution of rejecting their advice, to tender their resignation: the king desired till next day to deliberate; and on the morning of Wednesday, it was intimated to them that their resignation had been accepted.

This unlooked-for intelligence instantly roused the nation: it was no sooner announced in the house by the chancellor of the exchequer, than lord Ebrington gave notice of his intention to move an address to the king, on the state of public affairs, next evening; and lord Althorp's proposal, that this motion should be postponed for a short time, to prevent embarrassment in the formation of a new ministry, met with no acceptance. It became manifest to the friends of the ejected ministers, that nothing could immediately reinstate them but an insuperable obstacle placed in the way of their competitors; and what more difficult to be overcome, than a previous vote of the house of commons, which might tell the latter, that by accepting office they would act in defiance of that branch of the legis-

lature which commanded the public purse? Accordingly, the motion, being submitted to the house, was carried by 288 voices against 208; and an address was presented to the king, expressing deep regret at the change in administration, and great anxiety that the reform bill should pass un-mutilated; with an earnest supplication that his majesty would call such persons only to his councils as consented to promote that object.

Great masses of the population, eager for reform, were up simultaneously and in co-operation with the house of commons: all stood, as it were, prepared for action; the country took an attitude of determined resolution; even other nations looked with intense anxiety to this contest; and the most important interests of mankind appeared to be suspended on its issue. In the metropolis, the National Union met on the very evening of the day which saw the resignation of ministers; 1200 new members enrolled themselves at that meeting, and 2000 more on the morrow: it was unanimously resolved, 'that the betrayal of the people's cause was not attributable to lord Grey or his administration, but to the base and foul treachery of others; that meetings be recommended in every county, town, and parish throughout the kingdom; which, by inducing compliance with the unanimous wishes of the people, may prevent the mischief that would otherwise result from the general indignation; that a petition be presented to the house of commons, praying the appointment of commissioners to receive the supplies; and that, until the bill pass, they be not managed by the lords of the treasury.' On Thursday, May the tenth, the common council met at Guildhall, and passed a number of resolutions, expressing their mortification and disappointment at the distressing communication made by ministers, that his majesty had refused to them the means of carrying the reform bill through the house of lords, though passed by a large majority of the commons, and by an overwhelming majority of the people; declaring, that the advisers of such a refusal had put to hazard the stability of the throne and tranquillity of the country; also petitioning the commons to withhold supplies till such reform bill be carried; and extolling the conduct of earl Grey and his coadjutors: a committee was appointed to meet daily for the adoption of such measures as might be deemed necessary. Next day, the livery also met, and passed a similar string of resolutions; adding, however, 'that they viewed with distrust and abhorrence, attempts at once interested and hypocritical, to

delude and mislead the people by pretended plans of reform, promised or proposed by insidious enemies of all reform.' The speeches at this meeting were made in a daring spirit of resistance to any administration that might attempt to assume the reins of government, without the whole bill; but more especially were they hostile to the duke of Wellington, who was represented as desirous of governing this country by the sword: his majesty himself was not spared, for yielding to domestic influence, and pressing to his bosom pernicious counsellors: but the majority of the house of lords was more peculiarly attacked, as men who would mix blood with corruption; friends of every despotism; representatives of Miguel and Ferdinand, of Russian lords and German ladies: on the same day, the electors of Westminster met at the Crown and Anchor tavern, pursuant to notice, for the purpose of 'adopting such measures as the alarming state of the country required:' sir Francis Burdett was called to the chair; and the speakers, excited by the rabid eloquence of Mr. O'Connell, were still more violent than any who had yet come forward at this alarming crisis: similar meetings were held in Southwark; also in the parliamentary district of Marylebone, St. Pancras, and Paddington, where a crowd of 20,000 persons were harangued by Mr. Hume, who had been called to the chair; and a strong address to the king was agreed to.

News of earl Grey's resignation reached Birmingham on the morning of Thursday, May the tenth; and by eleven o'clock a printed placard was exhibited in many windows; of which the following is a copy:—'Notice—No taxes paid here until the reform bill is passed!' In the course of the day, 500 gentlemen, who had hitherto stood aloof, enrolled themselves members of the Union: at four in the afternoon, the inhabitants of the town and vicinity assembled, in immense multitudes at Newhall-hill; and a petition was voted to the house of commons, which, in addition to a prayer that the supplies might be stopped, contained this ominous sentence:—'Your petitioners find it declared in the bill of rights, that the people of England may have arms for their defence, suitable to their condition, and as allowed by law; and they apprehend, that this great right will be enforced generally, in order that the people may be prepared for any circumstances that may arise:' a deputation was then named for the purpose of carrying their petition to London, and communicating to the common council, and city of Westminster, the determination taken by the counties

of Warwick and Stafford to aid them in the common cause.

Manchester received intelligence of earl Grey's resignation on Thursday forenoon; and a petition to the commons, to stop the supplies, was that same day signed by 25,000 persons: another was sent on the fourteenth, from Liverpool, by the Reform Union, which met in Clayton-square, viscount Molyneux, son of the earl of Sefton, being in the chair. The news spread rapidly from south to north, exciting in Scotland, as well as in Ireland, the most energetic measures; nor do the annals of this country present a more alarming period than the interval between the ninth and sixteenth of May; the former being the day on which his majesty accepted the resignation of the reform ministry, and the latter that on which it was recalled to office. The tories, who had for some time been encouraged by their success with the king, and at the critical moment had received private intelligence of his altered sentiments, endeavored, by putting the bill out of joint, to get it into their own hands; or to obtain a pretext for representing lord Grey as a pertinacious and impracticable man, stickling for a mere point of form, against the opinion of a majority: it was no part of their plan to drive his lordship from office with the honors of popularity; but rather to exhibit him as an incapable supporter, if not a betrayer, of the course which he had taken in hand: they also desired leisure to form plans for their own return to power; but were wholly unprepared for the readiness and determination with which the premier comprehended and defeated their plot.

As soon as the king had resolved to accept the resignation of his cabinet, he sent for lord Lyndhurst, desiring that nobleman to obtain the opinion of parties respecting the advice which he had rejected, and also authorising him to adopt measures for the formation of a new ministry: at the same time, he declared, that 'extensive reform' was the express condition on which such a ministry must be based. It was thought somewhat strange that the noble lord should instantly carry the royal message to the duke of Wellington, whose sentiments on the subject of reform had been so fully and openly declared: but his grace was found willing to make large sacrifices, and encounter any degree of obloquy, in order to extricate his sovereign from embarrassment: he desired no office, much less that of prime minister; yet, if necessary for the king's service, he was ready to serve in

any way that might be thought fit. After some consultation between these noble lords, it was thought advisable to offer the first place to sir Robert Peel; but that wary statesman refused the bait: by an 'extensive reform,' he could not but understand all the main principles of the bill; and it was impossible for him to accept office, when, hostile as he had constantly shown himself to every plan of extensive reform, he felt that he could be of no service to the king or to the country: lord Lyndhurst communicated the nature of his commission to Mr. Baring, lord Caernarvon, and a few other influential persons, who were not unwilling to take subordinate situations; but no leader was forthcoming. In the mean time, lord Ebrington's motion in the house of commons interposed insurmountable difficulties in the way of negotiations: a new ministry must be sought among the direct opponents of the bill; office must be accepted in defiance of the lower house; and the utter hopelessness of any change from a dissolution of parliament was apparent from the determined temper of the people: on Tuesday the fifteenth, therefore, lord Lyndhurst was obliged to inform his majesty, that the commission with which he had been entrusted had failed; and the king was reduced to the humiliating necessity of renewing intercourse with his discarded ministers. The same evening, earl Grey announced to the peers, that he had received a communication from his majesty, though of too recent a date to be followed by any decided consequence: both houses adjourned to the seventeenth; but before the commons separated, a debate had taken place on the presentation of the London petition, which, for boldness of invective, and spirit-stirring declamation, was hardly ever surpassed: it turned chiefly on the supposed conduct of the duke of Wellington, and some others, in accepting office under the peculiar circumstances of the period. Immediately before the adjournment, Mr. Baring stated, that all communications with the duke, relative to the formation of a ministry, were at an end; at the same time, he begged leave to correct a mistake into which some honorable members had fallen, concerning the actual acceptance of office by his grace: matters, he assured them, had never reached that point.

The lords had no sooner met on Thursday, than the duke of Wellington rose, and proceeded to give, what he called an explanation of his conduct during the last ten days; after which, lord Lyndhurst also entered on his explanation, in which he complained bitterly of being calumniated by the

periodical press, which now reigned paramount over the legislature and the country. In allusion to a charge made against him in the other house by sir Francis Burdett,—that, by obeying the commands of his sovereign, ‘he had been guilty of a gross dereliction of duty as a judge,’—he denied the assertion: the honorable baronet ought to have known, that, as a judge, he was a member of the privy council; and not only bound to give his majesty advice when called on, but voluntarily to tender it when he saw the throne or country in peril. Earl Grey said, he would not by one word add to the irritation that prevailed among peers on the opposition benches: it was for them to determine what sacrifices of former opinions, of repeated declarations, and of recent pledges, they were prepared to make: it was not his wish to impute to them improper motives, to lay down any standard of duty, to impose on them any rule of political consistency or good faith; but he could not help expressing surprise, that on an occasion like the present, when the house and the public expected a temperate explanation of recent proceedings, in which the noble duke and baron had been engaged, they should have indulged in violent party invective against the bill and ministers. He proceeded to justify his own conduct on the subject of reform, to support which was his only motive for entering on office: he repeated his former assertion,—that reform, to be satisfactory, must be extensive;—and this he thought sufficiently proved by the admission even of its most strenuous opponents; he then discussed at large the motion made by lord Lyndhurst; as well as the charge of the duke of Wellington,—that ministers had abandoned the king; and after expressing a strong sense of his majesty’s kindness toward him and his colleagues, he concluded by declaring, ‘that his continuance in office must depend on his conviction of his own ability to carry into full effect the bill on their lordships’ table, unimpaired in its principle, and all essential details.’ The cheering which followed this speech lasted for a considerable time after his lordship had sat down: many peers then rose in succession to exonerate themselves from the imputation of having participated in late negotiations with the duke and lord Lyndhurst; after which, the order of the day for a farther consideration of the bill was discharged; and the house adjourned.

On Friday, the re-instatement of earl Grey and his colleagues in their official departments was certified to both houses, when discussions in a very angry tone again took

place among the peers; but this announcement stopped another address to the king from the commons, which lord Milton, who had taken a very active part in all the proceedings, was ready to move: the most lively joy appeared to be diffused throughout the kingdom; for innumerable meetings were instantly convened, and congratulatory addresses drawn up, thanking ministers for their steady fidelity to the cause of the people, and praising their conduct in the most unqualified terms. On Monday, the lords went into committee, when the inverted order of the schedules, taken up at lord Lyndhurst's suggestion, was adopted; though in a very different spirit from that which was in the mover's mind. Schedule C. was voted, up to the Tower Hamlets, at the first sitting: next day, the Tower Hamlets, on which the question of the metropolitan districts depended, was discussed; but only thirty-six opposition peers were present to vote against ninety-one. On the ground, that, as the bill now stood, the agricultural interest of Lancashire would be utterly helpless, lord Ellenborough wished that county to be divided into three districts, each returning two members; the two southern divisions would thus be manufacturing, and the northern agricultural: but fifteen voices only were in favor of his proposition, while seventy-five adhered to the bill: in fact, about 100 peers had retired, with the duke of Wellington, from the sittings of the house; unwilling either to give their assent to the measure, or to force ministers, by continued opposition, into the necessity of adding numbers to the peerage.

On Monday, the fourth of June, earl Grey moved the third reading of the bill; when, after a short but spirited struggle, the lord chancellor put the question; and it did not appear for some moments that the house intended to divide; but when the premier went on to move, 'that the bill do pass,' lord Roden remarked, that the third reading had not yet been carried: a division therefore took place, and the numbers reported were, content one hundred and six; non-content twenty-two. After a few verbal amendments had been made, the bill was passed, and ordered back to the commons; when, the amendments of their lordships having been agreed to on the following day, the royal assent was given to it by commission on the seventh of June. The reform bill for Scotland was brought in by the lord advocate on the twentieth of June; and having met with little opposition in its progress, received the royal assent on the third of

August; while that for Ireland was introduced about the same time by Mr. Stanley in a very statesman-like speech, in which he took a review of the measure in all its ramifications, and explained its various bearings. The Irish members clamored for an increase of numbers; but ministers were proof against all their importunities; the whole bill became law on the seventh of August, 1832; and was celebrated by festivals and rejoicings throughout the empire.

Thus was brought to a conclusion an experiment pregnant with the most important consequences; an experiment, indeed, which shook the fabric of our political constitution to its very foundation, and which would probably have shattered to pieces any other in the world: in our own there happily exists an extraordinary power of adapting itself to alterations; but all reflecting persons must confess that we have gone to the utmost limit of organic change; and every patriotic reformer must be content with what he has now obtained: may a merciful Providence preserve us from universal suffrage, annual parliaments, and vote by ballot; for they would inevitably plunge us down that gulf, in which so many republics have already perished. At present, we are in no danger, while sound sense and good principles pervade the bulk of our community: encouragement also springs up in the mind which considers, that the reform of our constitution arose, not from any sudden impulse or outrageous violence, from civil contests in our streets, or the deposition of a monarch; but from long agitation of the question; from the growth of new interests; and from a fresh distribution of wealth and intelligence: for while our upper ranks reposed in their country mansions, or enjoyed their own exclusive society in the metropolis, the mercantile, manufacturing, and monied classes were advancing with a rapidity which no one could have foreseen; and it is certain that the constitution could not have been maintained without admitting them into its privileges: how indeed could the frame of society shift under our feet, without occasioning a shock in our political institutions? Change indeed was strenuously opposed; but the moderate part even of those who strove to prevent it, contented themselves with the artifices of delay or discussion, and a dexterous use of that influence which arises from rank, property, and station: it was only a small knot of insane politicians, who thought of preserving every ancient form of the constitution by force, or of altering the succession, and establishing a military despotism, by the aid of Orange associations: opposition however was in vain; the bill became law; and every

prudent person now sees the necessity of yielding obedience to its enactments. Of all the statesmen who resisted this measure, no one has since entered more fully into its spirit, no one has perceived more clearly the necessity of directing its influence by fair and constitutional means, rather than attempting violently to counteract its object or alter its provisions, than sir Robert Peel: for that acute statesman well knows, that if any institution be altered, not by accident or violence, but by a long series of events giving rise to a general conviction of the necessity of alteration,—it never can be re-established in its previous state: accordingly, he has anxiously endeavored, on various occasions, to prevent unnecessary collisions, and to promote a cordial union between the higher classes, and those into whose hands the principal share of political power has now passed: indeed, without such a union, what shall be found to counteract the schemes of democratic ambition?

It would be improper to dismiss this subject without noticing the successful efforts made by that estimable and patriotic nobleman, the marquis of Chandos, to protect the landed interests, and to counteract an overwhelming force of democratic influence, which the reform bill appeared likely to infuse into the British constitution. At his suggestion, a clause was introduced, which extended the right of voting in county elections to every tenant, who was *bonâ fide* an occupier of lands or tenements liable to an annual rent of fifty pounds: this, as well as a similar right granted to possessors of copyholds of the value of ten pounds per annum, was opposed by several stanch reformers, on the grounds of its tendency to convert small counties, or divisions of counties, into a species of nomination boroughs, while it exposed tenants more than ever to the tyranny of landlords: the result however has shown that it was no more than a fair counterpoise to the vast enlargement of town constituencies.

In the mean time, the whig ministers, well knowing that the people would never remain satisfied with the shadow of reform without its substance, used the bill, as it was meant, to effect a very extensive but gradual restoration of other institutions, tainted by corruption, or dilapidated by time; still endeavoring to combine the maintenance of established rights with the redress of real grievances and acknowledged abuses: their conduct, indeed, cannot be more accurately described, than in the words of a leading reformer among themselves. ‘The tories,’ lord John Russell observed, ‘wished that the bill should remain a toy in the hands of the people, without benefit

to themselves or their posterity: I wished to see practical improvements, rather than attempts to square our constitution by abstract theory or foreign example;—to see popular influence control and check the exorbitant and corrupt expenditure of the state, renew or purify our institutions, by clearing away their defects, and restoring their original spirit;—to see the interests of all classes weighed, not by the prejudices and partial affections of those who counterfeited the people's voice, and usurped their inheritance; but by the legitimate representatives of that same people, summoned by the sovereign to uphold a monarchy of which they are the chief support, and to be the image of an enlightened nation whose confidence they enjoy.'

Finally it must be observed, that, as in all human institutions and changes faults and evils are to be found, such may be perceived in the great measure of reform. Many complain, that by extending the elective franchise among the lower classes it has opened a wider door to corruption; that by its copious introduction of demagogues into the house of commons, it has debased the tone and character of that assembly; that it delays the progress of all practical business, while members waste weeks and months of each session in harangues delivered solely to please their popular constituencies; and that by closing the entrance into parliament against a variety of interests formerly represented, it too much narrows the sovereign's choice of public servants in the parliamentary offices of state; whilst it resolves all other objects into a fierce and ingrossing struggle between the two great forces of national representation, that of the towns and that of the land. These evils, and it must be confessed that they are such, might have been avoided, if the high tories had not, by rejecting all plans of moderate and salutary reform, driven their opponents to extreme measures: even now we may reasonably hope that they will be modified and changed by time: a large store of good taste and good principles is still left within the walls of St. Stephen's; good examples as well as bad are catching; with the progress of education the constituencies themselves will change for the better; and their representatives will of course change with them, until the British senate shall not only have resumed its ancient integrity, but, having discarded its dull speeches and immeasurable debates, shall have regained that polish which rendered it the great ornament of the civilized world.

During the latter part of the debates on the reform bill, some other important measures were passing through parliament;

among which was one to abolish the punishment of death in cases of horse-stealing, and of stealing to the value of five pounds in a dwelling-house. On the twenty-fifth of June, when this bill was in a committee of the house of lords, the earl of Eldon strongly expressed his disapproval of so great a relaxation of our laws; declaring that according to his experience the fear of death very often operated to prevent the commission of those crimes against which it was directed; and illustrating his opinion by many examples drawn from that experience. On the second of July, the same nobleman was among the unsuccessful supporters of Lord Roden's motion for an address to the crown on the state of Ireland: in reply to the plea that the disturbances of that country had existed from early times, he observed—'that the law ought to have been put in force against them by government: to leave matters of such a kind to be settled by the progress of good sense and calm reflection was, in critical circumstances, an unsafe mode of proceeding; for if calm good sense had been absent for so many centuries, it was not very likely to return in time to be of service now: the common law must become utterly useless, if, before it could be brought into action, it were necessary to wait and see the mischief done. He was convinced that the resistance to payment of tithes began in a conspiracy, which, if prosecuted with vigor, might easily be destroyed.' These observations were directed against the dictates of lord chancellor Plunkett, as to conspiracies, the common law of the country, and the neglect of applying that law. On the twenty-sixth of July, and on the seventh of August, with reference to lord Brougham's bill for abolishing chancery sinecures and increasing the chancellor's retiring pension from £4000 to £5000 a-year in consideration of the patronage thus cut off, lord Eldon briefly vindicated his own conduct in the *distribution* of patronage, and objected to the haste with which so extensive a change was pressed forward; yet at that moment the grave was scarcely closed over the remains of a son on whom this grand objector to changes had conferred *six* of the most lucrative offices under the great seal, four in possession and two in reversion; enabling him to live in splendor, as a man of pleasure, without any attention to professional cares.¹³

¹³ See Life of Lord Eldon, vol. iii. pp. 171, 186.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

WILLIAM IV. (CONTINUED.)—1832.

General election—State of the continent—Discussion of the slave question—Opening of the first reformed parliament—Bill for the suppression of disturbances in Ireland—Irish church bill—Loan to the clergy of Ireland—Act for the extinction of slavery in the British colonies—Renewal of the Bank charter—Settlement of the East India question—Factory bill—Corporation commission—Foreign politics—Close of the session—Death of lord Grenville—Succeeded as chancellor of Oxford by the duke of Wellington—Opening of the session of 1834—Joint address of the lords and commons—Divisions in the cabinet—Renewal of Irish coercion bill—Earl Grey resigns, and lord Melbourne is created premier—Rejection of the Irish tithes bill by the peers—Grievances of dissenters—Commutation of tithes—Poor-laws amendment act—Debates on agriculture—Shipping interest—Financial statements—Close of the session—Unpopularity of ministers—Dissolution of the cabinet—Administration of sir Robert Peel—Dissolution of parliament—General election—Ecclesiastical commission—Meeting of the new parliament—Election of Mr. Abercrombie as speaker—Defeat of ministers on the address—Orange societies—Malt tax—Dissenters' marriage bill—Irish tithes bill—Defeat of ministers—Resignation of sir Robert Peel, and recall of lord Melbourne's administration—Lord Melbourne's new administration—Adjournment of the house—Several ministers lose their seats—Ministers proceed with caution—Municipal reform—Debates on the subject—Consideration in commons of the bill for regulating the Irish churches—Rejected by the lords—Bill to suspend payment of sums advanced to the Irish clergy—Protest from the Scotch assembly's committee—Orange lodges—Amendment of the reform bill—Motion to admit ladies to the house of commons—Agricultural distress—Whole system of taxation brought under notice—The budget—Canadian affairs—Close of the session; and king's speech—Mr. O'Connell's progress—Cape of Good Hope—Resumption of Canadian affairs—Affairs of foreign nations—Domestic occurrences—Queen's visit to Oxford—Royal visit to Greenwich Hospital—State of our merchant marine.

AFTER the rising of parliament, the grand objects of public attention were the registration of the new constituency under the reform bill, and other preparations for a general election,

which, it was understood, was to follow, as soon as the registration was completed: this having been quietly effected, parliament, which had been prorogued by commission on the sixteenth of October, was dissolved on the eighth of December, and the first general election under the new act took place; the writs being made returnable on the twenty-ninth of January, 1833. In regard to the machinery of the bill, it was found to work much more smoothly than its opponents anticipated: even in the most populous places, the polling, when not interrupted by riotous proceedings, was concluded within the two days prescribed by the act; less time and opportunity were allowed for bribery; and the disturbances which used to arise from drunkenness and profligacy now ceased to disgrace our elections; and here was a vast improvement over the old system: in regard to the candidates, there was a great dislocation of old connexions and previous interests: three parties were in the field; first, the ministerialists, anxious, at this time, to consolidate their grand work of reform, and to reap the best fruits which it was calculated to produce; secondly, the tories, who now assumed the appellation of *conservatives*; whose prejudices had been violently assailed, and whose interests and hopes had been rudely blasted: these in the bitterness of disappointment generally coalesced to oppose all the principles of reform, and to support those men who would strive to make them retrograde; lastly, the radicals, or destructives, who were desirous of spurring ministers on much faster and farther than they desired to go: these men not only bound themselves by pledges to distinct propositions, as short sessions, universal suffrage, and vote by ballot; but promised to descend into the minute details of administration, and to wage continual war against what was called the profligate expenditure of government.

The elections generally went in favor of ministerial candidates, or of those who professed adherence to the cause of reform; for in almost every borough success depended on the newly-created electors, who could scarcely refuse their votes to that party, by whose means they had procured their privileges; but in a large proportion of the counties, conservative candidates were returned. In Scotland, the whigs were most successful; for out of fifty-three representatives elected in that portion of the empire, not more than ten or eleven were tories; nor could half that number be accounted radicals: in Ireland, however, ministers could not boast of such decided success; for there agitation was against their cause; Mr. O'Connell

having denounced them, even while the reform bill was in progress, as acting with insult and injustice toward Ireland in the measure of change that was meted out to that country. Thus fell that supreme influence of toryism, which had so long predominated in British councils—not because its principles were odious to the people at large; but because its practices had become vicious and corrupt, from having been too long associated with lavish expenditure and grievous taxation, sinecure places, and extravagant pension-lists; because it had felt and expressed too great a sympathy with aristocratic oppression at home, and despotic tyranny abroad; in short, because it had not advanced with the spirit of the age. It will revive, and regain confidence among the people, whenever the whigs shall aid, as they are too much inclined to aid, tyranny of a baser kind, courting the alliance of radicalism, preferring what seems expedient to what is right, and striving to outstrip that spirit of the age, which ought to be treated with caution, as well as observed with respect.

Before we conclude the annals of this year, it may be observed, that although not actually at war with any power, our sovereign had become a party to a treaty with the French king, for adopting coercive measures against Holland, and recovering Antwerp from the Dutch. Don Pedro, having landed in Portugal, took possession of Oporto: in which place, after some slight successes, he was shut up by the Miguelites, who bombarded the town, blockaded the Douro, and placed the invader in a very critical situation. In the east, a quarrel took place between the sultan and Mahomet Ali Pasha of Egypt, which not only threatened serious consequences to the Turkish empire, but occasioned such interference on the part of Russia, as roused the jealousy and vigilance of other European powers: toward the end of June, the British public first learned that it was the intention of ministers to despatch the premier's son-in-law on a special mission to Russia; and much confidence was placed in the integrity and talents of lord Durham, for a mitigation of that cruel lot which hung over the unhappy Poles. The subject was brought before the commons during this session by colonel Evans, member for Rye, who moved, though without success, for a resolution demanding the strict performance of treaties entered into by Russia and other European powers, with regard to Poland. In a long and able speech on this question, the gallant officer, adverting to the treaty of 1815, of which the treatment of Poland was so striking an infraction, noticed the general

conduct of the Russian government, 'as one series of unjustifiable aggressions on other nations, of territorial aggrandisement, and violations of national law and faith. The contest with Persia,' he said, 'and the subsequent war with Turkey, were instances of this aggression; and the result of both was territorial aggrandisement. Russia, as it was well known, was the principal moving power in preventing the establishment of a constitutional government in Naples, Piedmont, and other states of Italy; and it was equally well known, that chiefly through her influence France sent an unjustifiable expedition to Spain: next came the atrocious case which they were then discussing, on which it was not necessary for him to dwell.' This part of the subject, however, was taken up by that ready and consistent friend of humanity, sir Francis Burdett, in a speech worthy of the best days of British eloquence: he contended, in opposition to sir Charles Wetherell, who thought no treaty had been broken by Russia,—that the independence of Poland would have been a much worthier object of English interference, than that of Belgium, about which so much had been said and done.

On all these questions, it must be confessed, that effectual interference in the affairs of other nations is an object of great delicacy as well as difficulty: still, it is a proud boast for Great Britain, that there is one spot within her limits, where the sentiments of freedom and humanity may be spoken loudly enough to reach the ears of a tyrant; where his atrocities may be openly denounced; and his barbarities recorded for the detestation of mankind, until their continued perpetration be no longer tolerated.

Another interesting subject, relating to the Germanic states, was brought before the commons by Mr. H. L. Bulwer; who moved for an address to the king, requesting his majesty to exert his influence with the diet, in opposition to the course which that body was then pursuing: in doing this, the honorable member traced an outline of the political history of the Germanic confederacy, from its free government, suited to the genius of the times, to its termination with the victories of Austerlitz and Jena, when the principle of oppressing small states to aggrandise the larger was first avowed and practised. The defeat of Napoleon in his Russian campaign gave to Germany an opportunity of casting off a yoke which had been reluctantly borne: Russia and Prussia then appealed to her former free constitutions, the restoration of which was distinctly promised, when the Germanic states rose *en masse*;

and the battle of Leipsic, with the downfall of the French power, speedily followed. By the second article of the congress of Vienna, the promises of Russia and Prussia were respected, and the rights of every class in the nation were solemnly guaranteed, with the sole opposition of Wurtemberg. Having then dwelt at some length on the part taken by this country in these affairs, he came to the late protocol of the diet, the chief object of which was to render the representative bodies of the several states useless, by relieving their despotic princes from every embarrassment which an efficient control by such assemblies might create, and to protect Austria and Prussia against the influential example of popular institutions. 'The sovereigns of those two countries,' said Mr. Bulwer, 'are willing to give just so much constitutional liberty to Germany, as will not allow its writers to write, its professors to teach, its chambers to vote taxes, make speeches, or propose resolutions; whilst every state shall be so inviolate, so independent, that, with or without the invitation of its sovereign, a deputation of Austrian or Prussian hussars may be sent to keep it in order.' Then came the question for consideration;—was it politic for England, under such circumstances, to interfere? Our situation, as it appeared to him, rendered it incumbent on us to express an opinion, at least, in favor of the German people; or we must be thought to take part with their rulers: though he would never recommend a hasty and foolish interference with foreign states; yet he would not consent that England should be a cipher in the political combinations of Europe, looking with indifference on the continent, and thinking that no changes there can possibly affect her: for if there be any one thing more than another which immediately affects British interests, it is the fate of Germany: unite that country under a good government, and it is at once a check on the aggrandisement of France and the ambition of Russia; leave it as it is, and it becomes a tool in the hands of the one, or a prey to the other. After contrasting the effects of the German armies, acting under Austria and Russia, against France, with those resulting from the real confederation of the people, Mr. Bulwer concluded with his motion for an address; but lord Palmerston, though he complimented the honorable member for his zeal and ability, dissented from his conclusions; and was unwilling to believe, that the governments alluded to would be so impolitic as to put down free constitutions.

A remarkable discussion took place in August at Liverpool; which, of all towns in our empire, was intitled to notorious

distinction in the encouragement of the slave trade, and in the large profit which it had drawn from so infamous a traffic: yet a public disputation was held this year in the amphitheatre of that town, and in the presence of more than 8000 persons, respecting the justice and expediency of an early and total abolition of colonial slavery. Mr. Thompson, who was the agent of an anti-slavery society in London, laid before his audience the prominent evils of this system, in twenty-six heads; and was replied to by the noted Peter Borthwick, the ostensible organ of the West-India planters, who boldly denied that any of the circumstances enumerated by his antagonist as evils, were really such, with one exception.¹ This disputation is said to have excited an extraordinary degree of interest among all parties, and to have been listened to with a patience and forbearance highly deserving commendation: the champion of slavery, however, was thought to have prejudiced his cause by attempting to defend the most vulnerable points; by which he gave to his opponent an opportunity of exposing in detail all its evils, and creating in the public mind a feeling, which it should have been the especial aim of the West Indian party to avoid;—that of an utter abhorrence of slavery, with a consequent indifference to any claims for compensation, in case of its abolition. The advocates of humanity, however, were highly gratified, by finding the intire system generally condemned in a town, where, only a few years before, it had been most strongly patronised; and where the highest mercantile classes were intimately connected with its odious details.

In this year England and France lost two men, whose literary and scientific fame had filled the whole civilised world. Sir Walter Scott died on the twenty-first of September, aged sixty-one; and baron Cuvier on the fifteenth of May.

A short time before the close of last session, Mr. Mannors Sutton had announced his intention of retiring from the arduous duties of speaker, which he had executed with much dignity and honor, during sixteen years: an act also had passed, granting him a pension of £4000 per annum, with a reversion of £3000 to his son; but he had not been advanced to the peerage, although such a mark of favor is usually bestowed on those who have occupied the chair of the house for a long period, and with distinguished applause: he had

¹ This was the tearing asunder of the nearest and dearest ties of nature; and the rapid decrease of the slave population, which even Mr. Borthwick allowed was going on at the rate of seven and a half per cent. annually.

been returned one of the members for the university of Cambridge at the general election ; and ministers, having obtained his consent to be put in nomination, resolved to support his pretensions to the office of speaker in the new parliament : they thought that the present constitution of the house rendered the aid of an experienced guide particularly necessary, and that they could gain for themselves the praise of economy ; since the country would only have to pay the salary of a speaker actually filling the chair, instead of being also burdened with the pension of a retired officer : on the other hand, the more violent reformers resolved to oppose the election of Mr. Sutton, on the score of his politics, and to make out that no money would be saved ; as they held that he would be intitled both to his salary and to his pension. When parliament therefore met, on the twenty-ninth of January, Mr. Hume moved, that Mr. Littleton, one of the members for Staffordshire, should occupy the chair ; considering it a matter of the highest importance, that the speaker should concur generally in the political sentiments entertained by a majority of members : he was seconded in his motion by Mr. O'Connell, who denounced the ministerial plan as ' another instance of paltry truckling,' and protested against this relapse into toriyism.

On the other side, lord Morpeth moved, and sir Francis Burdett seconded the motion, that Mr. Manners Sutton should take the chair ; insisting on the admitted fact of his superior qualification, as well as the candid and impartial conduct which he had observed during the late political struggles : it was also shown by the great law officers of the crown, that he would have no claim to his retiring annuity, together with his salary ; and a division of the house gave him a triumphant majority of 241 votes against 31.

On the fifth of February, the first session of the new parliament was opened by the king in person ; who, in his speech, took a comprehensive view of our foreign and domestic relations, in which the affairs of Holland and Belgium, the approaching termination of the charters of the Bank and the East India company, the temporalities of the church, and the state of Ireland, rent by the struggles of contending parties, were prominently introduced. In the house of lords the address was voted unanimously ; a slight discussion only being elicited by the sentiments of lord Aberdeen and the duke of Wellington, against the foreign policy of government, especially that regarding Portugal and Holland. In the house of commons the case was different ; for a part of the royal speech, which

pointed at the adoption of extraordinary measures to repress that insubordination prevailing in Ireland, which defied all laws, excited violent indignation among a large portion of the Irish members, and produced a furious philippic from Mr. O'Connell; by whom the address was designated as a 'bloody, brutal, unconstitutional document.' It was, he said, nothing more than he expected—a declaration of civil war; such a declaration as this country once put forth against America, though she had reaped from it nothing but discomfiture and disgrace: after seven centuries of oppression, there was still to be a call for blood in Ireland. Having gone through a long statement of grievances, Mr. O'Connell declared, 'that all the outrages, which were at the present time perpetrated in Ireland, must be laid at the door of the whigs; whom he accused of having violated the treaty of Limerick, and of being at all times the bitterest enemies of his country: finally, he called on them to put down the cry already raised for repealing the union, by doing justice to Ireland, and thus showing that a repeal was unnecessary.' Mr. Stanley answered this speech in a strain of caustic severity, which was never forgiven by the agitators or their leader; and lord Althorp, admitting that it was the duty of parliament to remove from the Irish people every just grievance, and declaring that the present government intended to do so, as far as lay in their power, justly asked, if it was not a grievance, that neither property nor life was secure in that country? and, whether this evil ought not first to be removed? Many radical members, however, spoke strongly against all coercion; declaring that they would not join ministers in measures tending to create a civil war: Mr. Bulwer also told them, that the independent representatives of the people in that house, 300 new members, allied to no old party, and attached to no superstitious observance of whig names, could not, night after night, hear grievances stated by the Irish members, which received no other answers except demands for soldiery, without dropping off, in serious defection, from the ministerial majority. The debate was carried on by adjournments four days, to the eighth of February; when O'Connell's amendment, for a committee of the whole house on the address, was supported by only 40 votes against 428: from this period, however, the time of the house became more and more occupied with the complaints of Irish agitators, and the enthusiastic struggles of their chief for justice to his country, until the regular business of parliament became seriously interrupted: beside all this, the overwhelming

quantity of attempted legislation, in consequence of the new constitution of the house of commons, rendered an alteration in the times of sitting absolutely necessary; so that, on the motion of lord Althorp, it was carried, that the house should meet, three days of the week, from twelve to three o'clock, for the transaction of private business; and two days, for the reception of petitions.

A coercion bill, for the suppression of disturbances in Ireland, was brought before the lords by earl Grey, and carried without opposition; for the conservative, or anti-ministerial peers, thought that the only fault of government lay, in not having proposed such a measure sooner: but it had to struggle through a more stormy course in the lower house; where O'Connell gave notice, that he would move a call of members for the twenty-seventh of February, and repeat it whenever he perceived any relaxation of its effects, so long as the bill was before them: he taunted ministers, likewise, with the delay which, as he insinuated, was interposed against their remedial measures; reminding them, that there was another house, through which they might be unable to carry a redress of grievances, whatever was the unanimity with which it enacted measures of coercion;—a house, where 'any proposal, springing from malignant hatred of Ireland, was sure to pass.' Mr. Stanley justly denied the necessity of remedial and repressive measures going on together; but declared, that if ministers found themselves unable to carry both, they would resign office.

On the twenty-seventh, the house having been called over, lord Althorp moved the first reading of the bill; ministers having waited to the last moment, in order to ascertain the possibility of restoring order by the ordinary administration of the laws. After expounding at length the evils which afflicted Ireland, and explaining the provisions of this bill as calculated to repress them, his lordship declared, that it had no reference to the collection of tithes, or any other individual purpose, except the maintenance of social order: it was, however, met by an amendment from Mr. Tennyson, for a fortnight's delay; in which ministers might, by a select committee or otherwise, satisfy the house that dangers really existed, and could by no other means be effectually warded off. A vehement debate ensued, which was carried on for six days, and closed by a speech of remarkable energy from Mr. O'Connell; but, on a division, the first reading of the bill was carried by a majority of 466 to 89; a preponderance which seemed to promise an easy passage through its other stages; especially, as the dis-

cussion, which generally accompanies the second reading, had been elicited by the first: when, however, the order of the day for the second reading was moved on the eighth of March, Mr. Hume opposed it in a violent speech, denouncing the apostacy of ministers: on some matter of form, the second reading was then put off till the eleventh, and carried, after a warm debate, by 363 to 84. Notwithstanding this overwhelming majority, swelled by the conservative party lending their support to government, the progress of this bill through committee, up to the twenty-second of March, was a series of conflicts; and so many members, in voting for its principle, declared that they did not mean to support all its provisions, that ministers found it prudent to alter several enactments; especially those relating to courts-martial: after a few more divisions, the bill was read a third time, and passed, on the twenty-ninth of March; when it was sent back to the upper house, for their concurrence in the alterations made by the commons. Though much dissatisfaction was expressed by several conservative peers, especially with the proviso, that no district should be proclaimed because tithes were not paid in it, as likely to operate in preventing the payment of tithes altogether, the bill was finally passed: on the tenth of April, the lord lieutenant issued a proclamation, suppressing the association of Irish volunteers; after which he applied the provisions of the act to the county and city of Kilkenny, with good effect; while several illegal societies and political clubs being suppressed, the list of outrageous offenders against the laws decreased throughout the country. The late discussions had produced many personal conflicts in debate between the Irish secretary and O'Connell, as well as the more devoted of his adherents; by whom Mr. Stanley was regarded with sentiments of bitter hostility: this arose, not more from the energy and effect with which that gentleman repelled the attacks of repealers, than from a supposition, that he was more determined, than some of his colleagues were suspected to be, to surrender no portion of the revenues of the Irish protestant church: Mr. Stanley therefore consulted his own tranquillity, by accepting, at this time, the office of secretary for the colonies, vacated by viscount Goderich, who was made lord privy seal, and advanced a step in the peerage by the title of earl of Ripon. Sir John Cam Hobhouse now became Irish secretary.

The severity of a coercion bill for Ireland is often met by observations which are only suitable to such a bill if it were

proposed for England; no consideration being given to the peculiar character of the Irish people, and the state of society, so different from that of the sister kingdom, where tranquillity can be preserved without the aid of extraordinary statutes and penalties. Great Britain is driven to seek corn abroad, though Ireland might by good management double its produce: but the peasantry will not, or under their peculiar circumstances cannot, cultivate the soil as they ought; nor will they suffer others to do so: and if the stranger introduces capital and skill into the country, some of them will be found to murder him; whilst others look on the act with indifference or approval. It is said, therefore, that, although no system of severity by itself alone will be sufficient to set matters right, yet no amendment can be introduced without it; and that we must not suppose that strictness and severity in Irish government are identical with tyranny, or unkindness toward the people. From the different modes of thinking and acting, the same sort of laws which suit the English will not suit the Irish; for the general effect of any law is dependent on the previous habits and prevailing character of those to whom it is applied. *Quid leges sine moribus vane proficiunt?* If it be asked whether by coercive acts the Irish can be taught to respect and love the laws? it is answered, that by no earthly means can they be made to love that mild but continual restraint in which the practical operation of the British laws consist: what the Irishman loves is the extreme of idleness, and what he will patiently endure is the opposite extreme of personal restraint: it is not his nature to enjoy a middle state: he does not so estimate the value of regulated liberty, that for its sake he will consent to endure the continual presence of moderate control: this is conformable to the Saxon, but not to the Celtic character: legislation cannot change the natural constitution of human races; policy may mix them; and after a length of time may obliterate or neutralise their respective characteristics: but this has not been effected in Ireland; and as the national disposition is essentially different from that of the English, it is idle to suppose that the same laws will work similarly upon both.

There may be much truth in such observations: but at all events, active exertions on the part of government to ameliorate the condition of the people, ought quickly to follow the imposition of severe restrictions: sooner or later the subject must be grappled with; for while the people exist in a state of physical destitution, diversified only by periodical famine with its attendant mortality, and the landlords are exporters of that

food for which they grind the faces of a starving population, driving up rent to the highest pitch by competition, and ejecting the miserable occupants by thousands if they are unable to pay it—while these practices go on, coercion will be used in vain. Repeal of the union, and hatred of the protestant establishment, are not the roots of these evils, though they may be national sentiments, and expressive signs of irritation: until landlords find that there are some rights on land distinct from their own, and equally sacred; until laws are adapted for the nation; until legislation regulates such rights as militate against all moral and physical improvement in such a country as Ireland, tenants may be ejected, but intruders will have their brains knocked out; and a shot will be taken at landlords and magistrates who offend against that unwritten code which no act of parliament can change. And after all, what makes and secures property? Is it not the law? does not almost every bill which passes through parliament interfere with its rights? does not all taxation invade them? Is property in land anything more or less than a social compact for rendering the soil more subservient to the well-being of the community? and is there anything less than this, which is likely to secure the tranquillity, and possibly the safety, of our empire? anything else which is likely to reconcile multitudes of Irishmen to the ancient confiscation of their lands, and prevent a continual agitation for their recovery? A restraining government therefore would be wise in attending to the physical wants of the population: for until these, and means of permanent supply be obtained, the curfew laws will not be able to keep agitators, incendiaries, and assassins in bed at night; while the same people, if well fed, though they may strive for a local parliament and a church of their own, will at all events conduct their agitation peaceably.

In carrying on their measures for tranquillising Ireland, ministers had uniformly admitted, that grievances existed which ought to be redressed; and had declared a readiness to propose expedients for that purpose: at the head of these had always been placed the Irish established church, standing in the unpopular predicament of possessing large revenues, whilst a majority of the people belonged to a hostile faith, the clergy of which had once been possessors of that opulence: the object of the repealers was to pare down these revenues, while they disclaimed any wish of seeing them bestowed on their own clergy; but others, and those not Irishmen, regarding every religious establishment as an evil, considered the property of

the church as a fund which might be seized for what they called purposes of the state. Ministers resolved to take a middle course between such extremes, conceding much, while they retained what might be considered equal to the wants of the establishment: accordingly, on the twelfth of February, lord Althorp opened in the lower house those measures which government proposed with regard to the Irish church; the total revenues of which, after investigation, were found not to exceed £800,000 per annum. On these ecclesiastical funds, it was intended, after abolishing first fruits, to impose a tax, varying according to the value of livings and bishoprics, from five to fifteen per cent.; from the operation of which, however, all livings under £200 per annum were to be exempted; while the large revenues of the primate, and the bishop of Derry, were to be reduced respectively to the amount of £10,000 and £8,000 a year: the sum thus collected was to be applied, under commissioners, to the abolition of church cess; the augmentation of poor livings and building of glebe houses; the division of ecclesiastical unions; and the erection of churches: with respect to the offices of deans and chapters, it was proposed, wherever they were unconnected with the cure of souls, to abolish them altogether, or attach them to such cure; with regard to livings, where no duty had been done for the last three years, to suspend the appointment of ministers at the discretion of the commissioners; also, to abolish ten bishoprics, and annex the vacated sees to certain of those that were preserved: lastly, came the lands attached to bishoprics; and the chancellor of the exchequer laid down this principle,—that if, by the act of parliament to be introduced, any new value was given to benefices, that new value, not belonging properly to the church, might be immediately appropriated to the exigencies of the state: he believed that £500,000 a year was the value of all Irish episcopal lands to the lessees or tenants, though the bishops did not receive much more than £100,000: by a different mode of granting leases, his lordship showed that a sum of near £3,000,000 might be acquired for the state, without any diminution of income to the bishops; and he concluded with moving for leave to bring in a bill, to alter and amend the laws relating to the established church in Ireland.

The plan thus opened by lord Althorp was calculated to produce hostility from two opposite quarters;—from the conservative members of opposition, who detested its principle, which they thought destructive to the interests of the church; and from the economists, radicals, and repealers, in whose

opinion it left too much to the church untouched : it was clear, however, that these different kinds of opposition could not endanger the success of the bill in the house of commons ; for ministers were sure to be joined by one of the parties in resisting any amendment proposed by the other. While sir R. Inglis and Mr. Goulburn stigmatised the measure as tending to destroy protestantism in Ireland, most of the Irish members approved the plan, as far as it went : O'Connell, however, characterised the estimate of Irish church revenues as 'a base delusion ;' and the design of government as one which went to 'relieve no grievance, except church cess ; not even suspending the war against the poor man's pigs and tenth potato. Why then,' he added, 'did I, the other evening, so warmly approve the noble lord's measure ? Because it recognises an admirable principle, which he cannot now retract ; that where there are no spiritual wants, there is to be no receiver of tithes and church rentals.'

A month elapsed before this bill was brought in, and read, for the first time, on the eleventh of March : in its passage through the house, it occasioned much discussion ; and on the motion of Mr. Stanley, that clause was altered which appropriated the sum of £3,000,000 to the exigencies of the state : 'he was aware,' he said, 'that a strong feeling existed, both within and without the house, against the alienation of church property ; and therefore he proposed, that the sum alluded to should be paid into the hands of the ecclesiastical commissioners, to be applied to the same purposes as the other funds with which they were entrusted.' This alteration, though stigmatised by O'Connell as the basest act which a national assembly could sanction, was carried by 280 votes against 148 : beneficed clergymen also, in present possession of their livings, were to be exempted from the graduated tax, which was only to affect their successors : the provision, which empowered the commissioners to suspend appointments to benefices, where divine worship had been intermitted three years, was strongly, though unsuccessfully, resisted as bad in principle, and counteracting the expansive power and progress of protestantism in Ireland. On the eighth of July, the bill was read a third time, and passed, by a majority of 274 to 94.

It was the upper house, however, in which the most serious opposition was expected ; since there existed among the peers a majority capable of defeating ministers on any occasion which they might consider expedient ; and their leader, lord Eldon, when a petition was presented against its enactment, in the

beginning of April, had declared, that 'he would oppose it to the last of his life and the utmost of his power; for he thought it adverse to every established principle of government, and full of spoliation:' yet this majority, like the minority in the lower house, contained many individuals willing that large concessions should be made to the spirit of the times; and impressed with an opinion, that the more popular form which the constitution had lately assumed, rendered resistance unwise, where it did not appear to be demanded by the very principles of that constitution.

The bill having been read a first time *pro formâ*, the second reading was fixed for the seventeenth of July; and on the fifteenth, sir J. Wrottesley proposed a call of the house of commons, to promote the success of this measure, as that of the reform bill had been ensured, by putting the commons under arms, as it were, at the critical point of its progress: the motion, however, was strongly deprecated, as tending to embarrass ministers; who declared, that their official existence would depend on the success which this bill obtained. To the astonishment of the house, O'Connell, who had voted against its third reading, insisted vehemently that sir J. Wrottesley should persist in his motion; declaring, that, although no man could approve less of the bill than he did, yet the dignity of that house required them to resist any attempt of the lords to keep back even that little pittance of church reform which it contained: the motion was thus pressed to a division, but lost by a majority of 160 to 125.

The debate on the second reading of the bill in the lords was continued by adjournment to the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth of July; and it was passed, after an animated discussion, by 137 votes against 98. In the committee, several amendments were carried, and others successfully resisted; but one having been agreed to on the clause respecting a suspension of appointments to benefices,—that in all such cases, the bishop of the diocese should be intitled to act as a member of the board, if not one already,—the archbishop of Canterbury farther moved, that the revenue of the suspended benefice be applied to the building or repairing of the church and glebe-house belonging to such benefice; or, if they should not require it, that it be then paid into the ecclesiastical fund. This proposition, though opposed by ministers, was carried by a majority of two votes; when earl Grey adjourned the committee, for the purpose of considering what was expedient to be done;—a sort of intimation, that

it would be a question for ministers, whether they ought not to throw up the bill, and resign office: on due reflection, however, his lordship did not think this alteration affected the general efficacy of the bill so strongly as to justify him in abandoning a measure which he considered essential to the connexion of two kingdoms, to the safety of the people and church of Ireland, and to the general interests of the community. When the report was brought up, a few more slight alterations were admitted; the bill was passed on the thirtieth of July, by a majority of 135 to 81; and on the second of August, the commons agreed to the amendments of the lords; Mr. O'Connell observing, that they had not made the bill much worse than they found it; and protesting against its being viewed in any other light than as the first instalment of a debt due to Ireland.

Another measure, connected with that country, arose from the difficulty of collecting tithes; and a resolution was passed, that exchequer bills, not exceeding £1,000,000, be issued for advancing, under certain conditions, arrears of tithes due for 1831 and 1832, subject to a deduction of twenty-five per cent.; and the value of tithes for 1833, subject to a deduction of fifteen per cent., to any persons intitled to, and desirous of receiving such advances: the amount advanced was to be included in the tithe composition, so as to be repaid in the course of five years by half-yearly instalments: this plan was strongly opposed, principally on the ground that the money would never be repaid; since repayment was still to depend on a collection of tithe, which never would succeed: the pretended loan, it was said, would be converted into a gift; and England, beside paying its own tithe, would be likewise paying that of Ireland. The grand jury and jury bills also were subjects of great importance in the affairs of so distracted a country; for none but those acquainted with the jobbing and malversation of an Irish grand jury, could have conceived the abuses attending, and incidental to, their presentments; nor could the partiality displayed in the selection of a petty jury, and the intimidation of witnesses, easily have been surpassed: two commissions also were issued; one for inquiring into the corporations of Ireland, and the other for investigating the state of its laboring classes.

On the subject of West Indian slavery, at the commencement of this session, the minds of reflecting persons were fixed with intense anxiety; nor could any one doubt that it would be brought under the consideration of a reformed

parliament, when he observed the zeal of its opponents, and the hold which it had taken on the public: the excited hopes and growing intelligence of the slave population rendered its final settlement, at no distant period, inevitable; whilst every day of postponement was fraught with augmented danger: yet the extent of this subject, and the interests which it involved, as well as the conflicting principles and prejudices to be encountered, were sufficient to have appalled any set of men, engaged with so many other important objects: ministers, however, did not shrink from the arduous task; and the result was an act providing for the extinction of slavery in the British colonies on the first of August, 1834: nor, while humanity was thus consulted, was justice neglected; since the same act provided that a sum of £20,000,000 should be advanced to government by way of loan, to be distributed among the proprietors of slaves as a compensation for the loss of service. But had this act merely granted emancipation to the slave and compensation to the proprietor, it might have been satisfactory to those whose personal and pecuniary interests were directly concerned; yet it would not have been safe: it was absolutely necessary that some plan should be devised, for preventing the emancipated slave from relapsing into the condition of a savage; and for obviating the great injury which would accrue to the West India planter, as well as to the trade and revenue of this country, by the immediate and total cessation of slave labor: for these purposes, it was provided, that every negro should, immediately on his emancipation, become an apprentice to his late master for a period not exceeding six years, under an obligation of working forty-five hours in the week; but that he should not be subjected to vexatious enactments, or corporal punishment, degrading him in his own estimation; whilst he was to be undisturbed in his worship and instruction, his evidence to be received, and his family respected: by these arrangements, a moderate supply of labor was ensured to the proprietor; while time was given for the enactment of such laws and regulations as different communities might require, as well as for training up the emancipated slave to the duties of a free citizen: the details of this plan were properly left to the local experience of colonial legislatures; an opportunity also being afforded to them of anticipating, by laws of their own, the enactment of the British parliament, and of acquiring the gratitude and confidence of their slave population, by spontaneously conferring

on them the blessings of freedom: on one subject alone ministers felt it necessary to legislate immediately and decisively; removing all restrictions on the teachers of christianity in the colonies, except such as exist in the mother country. It only remains to add, that, in order to superintend the due execution of the proposed plan, and ensure both to masters and apprentices an impartial administration of the laws which were to regulate their mutual relations, it was resolved to send out from this country gentlemen to act as special magistrates, unconnected with local prejudices, and independent of colonial influence: thus commenced, in a truly christian spirit, one of the grandest experiments ever yet attempted; one of the noblest acts of legislation that ever recommended a nation to the protection of Divine Providence.

During no session of any preceding parliament, did the interests of trade and commerce receive greater attention; nor was it without extreme pleasure that practical men saw a reformed house of commons adopting, and even extending, those enlightened principles of policy, which, for some years, had prevailed in our legislature: that period of commercial distress, which lasted during the agitation of the reform bill, was gradually wearing away; and with the prospect of a permanent liberal government, trade appeared steadily increasing: the industry of the country was in full activity; and though the profits of capital were much less than during the feverish excitement of war, yet their general amount was larger, and their advantages were spread over a more extended surface. Two legislative enactments were at this time adopted, which must be considered as bearing on our commercial prosperity in a greater degree than any which, during a long series of years, have engaged the attention of parliament;—the renewal of the Bank charter, and that of the East India company. With regard to the first of these measures, which involved many intricate details, and was the subject of long and repeated discussions, its chief provisions were;—a monthly publication of the Bank accounts; the repayment of a portion of its capital; a partial repeal of the usury laws which impeded its action; an annual payment of £120,000 to government in return for privileges conceded; its notes made a legal tender, except at the Bank itself, or its branches; a quarterly return of the amount of circulation of all other banks; and certain regulations for the improvement of joint-stock banks, among which the power of obtaining a charter from the crown was not the least.

A settlement of the East India question, and of the China trade, was surrounded with peculiar difficulties ; but these, by diligence and attention, were all obviated ; and the measure introduced for this purpose was, with some slight modifications, adopted by parliament. One of the greatest advantages gained by the public was that which opened a rich field for the enterprise and industry of our merchants, by destroying the monopoly of trade in tea ; while facilities for conducting this branch of commerce, together with a considerable relief from taxation on what has become one of the necessities of life, was given by a subsequent bill for regulating the importation of that article : the long and complicated account between commerce and territory is now settled in a compromise approved by moderate men on all sides : the proprietors of India stock, having become creditors of the country placed under their care, will henceforth have a strong interest in improving its revenues by the maintenance of good order, and the encouragement of industry : the pernicious union of imperial and economical functions in one body is at an end : in the constitution of the board of control changes have been made, which, while they increase its efficiency, diminish the parliamentary influence of ministers : every office under the company has been thrown open to British subjects without distinction ; and probably the whole of India will soon invite European enterprise and European capital.

It is cheering to imagine not only what prolific sources of wealth and prosperity will be thrown open, but what means of happiness will be developed for the inhabitants of this great country when its cruel and iniquitous governments shall be wholly subdued, and all its merchants and agriculturists, its traders, and peasants, shall be released from the dread of violence, and brought into close contact with humane and polished rulers, who, far from envying them their possessions, will feel an honest pride in beholding their increase. There is one truth connected with our Indian empire, which is at length become apparent—that we can never govern it as we ought, until we possess the whole. While we have enemies remaining within the natural boundaries of our dominion, much of our attention must necessarily be occupied in defeating their machinations, while we watch the movements of their disorderly armies, or predatory bands, engendered within their territories, to be the curse of ours. Only when our authority shall be universally recognised, can we concentrate our energies for the amelioration of institutions, the encouragement of industry, and

the promotion of commerce. At present an immense army is required, as a kind of police, to prohibit lawless chieftains, little better than robbers, from pillaging and destroying their neighbors; and it is only when such a state of things is ended, that we can betake ourselves to the construction of those vast public works which are the precursors of civilisation. The revenues now consumed on camps, artillery, and munitions of war will then be extended on roads, canals, bridges, tanks, embankments, schools, colleges, and all those subsidiary institutions which accompany British colonists, and appear necessary for the completion of their schemes of happiness. At present the sword is scarcely ever out of our hands: a series of hostilities, expensive, harassing, and dangerous, has been the inheritance of all our governors: peace has been but the accidental condition of our oriental empire; and this from no lust of conquest, no ardor for war, but from a stern necessity, opposed to the earnest endeavors of government, both at home and abroad. Yet in all our conquests the general rule of conquest has been reversed: the reign of the strangers, aliens in blood, language, and faith, has been fraught with blessings far beyond any other in these regions: humanity and justice, security of life and property, arts and civilisation, follow the conquering sword, giving an earnest of what may be expected when all is under one extensive and beneficent dominion.

We must not omit to mention, that the commercial laws of the empire were at this time consolidated and brought into one volume; while no efforts were wanting on the part of government to promote in other states the adoption of the same liberal policy which has been found so advantageous to ourselves. A commission of trade was sent to France; and prohibitions on the export of raw silk from that country,—an object declared last year, before a committee of the commons, to be of vital importance to our manufactures,—were at length removed: nor was parliament less active and zealous in its endeavors to ascertain the actual condition of our laboring classes, than in its efforts to improve them: a committee was appointed for this purpose, at the suggestion of the declaimers about distress; and a laborious inquiry into the principal branches of national industry was carried on: in particular, the factory bill was elaborately discussed; and a commission of inquiry appointed, which collected a vast body of valuable information on that subject; so that an act was passed, which not only reduced the daily labor of children, but made provision for their education in a form which invites and admits the co-operation of bene-

volent persons of all religious sects: inspectors also have since been appointed, for the purpose of giving effect to this measure, and securing to the next generation the advantages of a manufacturing community of increased intelligence and improved morality. Our limits oblige us to pass by the various reforms begun or perfected in the law,² as well as the financial measures of the present session: it must, however, be observed, that great relief was given to the country at large, by a reduction of taxation to the amount of £1,545,000; whilst a rigid system of economy was observable in the army and navy estimates of the year: besides, the whole subject of appointments connected with these departments was referred to a committee; and the names of its members gave full warrant for belief that the inquiry would be searching, and the reduction as unsparing as was consistent with the efficiency of the services. Among the most important of the commissions appointed by government, was that for inquiring into the state of corporations, those last holds of tory corruption and abused patronage: no evil, in fact, called more loudly for reform than this: no abuses weighed more heavily on the general mass of the population in the municipal towns, than the administration of corporate property, and the undue exercise of powers given for the benefit of the people, but in most instances utterly perverted from their original design. If the representation of the country required alteration; if that had become corrupt from age, misuse, and change of times; every argument, used in furtherance of parliamentary reform, applied with tenfold justice and force to a complete revision and reconstruction of municipal corporations; most of which had become dens of iniquity, the avenues to which were strictly guarded against intruders, whilst their inmates dissipated the revenues of which they were appointed guardians. Yet, as when the reform bill itself was announced, furious passions again agitated a large

² A bill introduced by lord Wynford to diminish expense and delay in suits at law, of which the principal object was to enable a plaintiff and defendant to examine each other on interrogatories, was rejected through the combined resistance of lords Lyndhurst and Eldon, chiefly arising from the inexpediency of confounding the principles of legal with equitable proceedings. Lord Brougham's local jurisdiction bill was also defeated, chiefly by the strong stand made against it by the high legal authorities. 'I went down yesterday,' says lord Eldon, in reference to this measure, 'to denounce a most abominable law bill of the chancellor; spoke as strongly against it as an old lawyer's mind and body could enable him to speak, and moved to put it off for six months.'

portion of the community; and from this wholesome measure the greatest evils were predicted; while the utmost exertions were made to counteract its progress. Connected with this subject, was the change now made in Scotch burghs, where the whole system of self-election was intirely abolished: this flagrant abuse, which was introduced about four centuries ago, under a pretence of avoiding the tumults incidental to popular elections, had long ago produced its natural fruits, in the utter dilapidation of revenue, in a regular series of corruption and embezzlement, and at length, in the general discontent and indignation of all classes exposed to its influence: in vain, however, had the attention of parliament been called to a system, which was but too agreeable to its own leaders under the old *régime*: the power of corruption was too great to admit of its destruction, till the voice of the people prevailed in a reformed house of commons.

The transactions of our government in its foreign policy this year are too important to be passed over in silence. With regard to the Greek question, the grand object remaining to be accomplished, was to place the nation in a well-defined territory, under an independent government, calculated to secure the respect of foreign powers. When the present administration succeeded to office, they found an agreement entered into by their predecessors with the sultan, by which certain limits were settled for Greece, which would have given to its inhabitants no defensible frontier, but would rather have exposed them to a constant collision with their former oppressors: sir Stratford Canning therefore was despatched to Constantinople to make a more rational arrangement; and that able negotiator was successful in obtaining the consent of the Porte to an amended boundary. Prince Otho of Bavaria, an ignorant, obstinate, inexperienced boy, selected as king of Greece by the three mediating powers, arrived this year in his dominions; and Greece rescued at so costly a price of blood and treasure from the Ottoman scourge, was subjected to the leaden rule of Bavarian despotism: this scandalous appointment has led to innumerable evils, which still afflict that unhappy country, and tend to embroil all the cabinets which were instrumental in producing them.

The Belgian question, like the Greek, had its origin in events antecedent to the formation of the present government; so that ministers found a course chalked out, which they might modify as they advanced, though they could not retrace steps already taken. When the Netherland revolution first broke forth, the

king called on his allies for troops: these were refused; but his next request for the assembling of a conference was granted; and by subsequent acts of that assembly, a principle of separation between the two countries was established: the task then of the present government was to settle terms on which a separation should take place, so as to provide for the interests and security of all parties: the difficulties encountered arose from the obstinacy of the Dutch monarch, which burdened his subjects with expenses, fully counterbalancing the relief afforded by a division of the public debt between them and the Belgians. The citadel of Antwerp was to be evacuated in fifteen days, by the armistice which his majesty had invoked in November, 1830; but the possession of that fortress enabled him to harass the Belgians, and intercept their trade on the Scheldt; he therefore refused to give it up; so that England and France, failing to obtain co-operation from the other three powers, were obliged to have recourse to force: hence the siege of Antwerp by French troops, and an embargo laid on Dutch vessels by Great Britain. These vigorous measures disconcerted all the calculations of the Dutch monarch, and of his partisans, whether English Tories or continental absolutists; who vented their anger in predictions which utterly failed: the impregnable citadel of Antwerp, which was to have collected the tide of war round its bastions, surrendered in the beginning of this year to marshal Gerard; whilst our embargo, that was confidently declared to be harmless to the Dutch and ruinous to ourselves, produced the convention of the twenty-first of May, by which the Belgian question was totally changed. The king having agreed to accept an unlimited armistice, the principal point of discussion remaining was that of compensations; and Europe was secured against the danger of a general war, resulting from differences between Holland and Belgium: it may, however, be confidently predicted, that this latter state will not escape future disturbances: her liberal party which had achieved the revolution was dispossessed of power after a few years, because the wild and ardent spirits of its members were not in unison with the nations of Europe: unlike France, she did not possess a strong body of influential conservatives inclined to peace as advantageous to agricultural and commercial interests; so, when she had wrested power from the hands of her liberals, she was obliged to throw it into those of her ecclesiastics, as bigoted a body, and as hostile to every species of freedom, as any portion of the Romish church: these men, like the generality of churchmen when they enter on politics,

soon began to legislate and to govern in a sacerdotal point of view : their acts, and more especially their peculiar endowment of the University of Louvain, created a revulsion in the public mind, and the liberals began again to anticipate the resumption of power.

This present year also saw the closing prospect of those dreadful calamities which had so long weighed down the wretched people of Portugal : the tyrant Miguel's fleet was captured by our gallant Napier, and the siege of Oporto was raised ; a liberating army marched in triumph from the Guadiana to the Tagus ; Donna Maria was proclaimed in Lisbon ; and a British minister again presented himself at the court of the rightful sovereign. Our government, though strictly adhering to that neutrality which it had imposed on itself, contributed mainly to these successes, by requiring other powers to observe the same line of conduct : taught, however, by experience, it did not trust solely to assurances from the cabinet of Madrid ; but prepared itself for all events, by sending a powerful squadron under admiral Parker to the Tagus, with orders to take an active part for Don Pedro, the moment a Spanish force should appear in Portugal to assist the usurper. There can be but little doubt, if a tory government had been established in England,—especially when a motion made in favor of Don Miguel by the duke of Wellington, and the correspondence of his grace, which was published in the journals of the day, are taken into consideration,—that some pretence or other would have been found to let the Spanish army loose, for the purpose of keeping Portugal under subjection to the basest tyrant of modern times : the cause of right, however, triumphed ; and the moral effect of this may still be felt. While the attention of Europe was absorbed by events in the west, a sudden storm arose in the east : the throne of the sultan was first menaced by a rebellious satrap, and next endangered by a protecting ally : but the exertions of the British government, assisted by that of France, enabled the Porte to escape for the present from both those perils ; for the Egyptian army of Mahomet Ali retired from Asia Minor, and the Russians left Constantinople. It does not, however, appear yet to be in the design of their ambitious government to disturb the present system by new conquests in Europe : desiring only a free transit for her ships from the Euxine to the Mediterranean, Russia is content to abstain from foreign aggressions, until she has annihilated the spirit and very name of Poland, by incorporating its mutilated provinces into her

enormous empire: at present, she knows that other nations could recall Poland to political existence; and thus form a barrier, against which the leviathan of the north would rage in vain. Neither does Russia regard with alarm the revolutions which have lately agitated the continent: feeling convinced that within her own frontier the constitutional malady cannot penetrate, she rather views with satisfaction the attention of neighboring states distracted and averted from her ambitious projects in the east. In the mean time, she keeps her eye steadily fixed on Asia Minor and Persia; with a probable longing after the possession of Hindostan. The personal character of her autocrat affects but in a remote degree the policy of her empire: the ambition of Nicholas might possibly be satisfied: but he must be a party, despite of himself, in the plan traced out for the future destinies of his country;—a plan, which seems to be laid out on almost unerring principles; so admirably have they succeeded in operation up to the present hour. A good understanding with Austria may protect western Europe against that mighty power, which, like a thunder-cloud in the heavens, fills the beholders with alarm: but we must keep an unceasing watch over its progress in Asia; where already its possession of the whole eastern coast and the Black Sea, its conquests in Circassia, its demonstration on the Persian frontiers, and its probable occupation hereafter of Asia Minor, are enough to fill us with lively apprehensions for the future. With France, our relations have continued to afford, with some intermissions, a striking contrast to those exhibited in former periods of history: time was, when the countries imagined themselves natural enemies, and the foes of one became friends of the other: but those days seem happily to be passing away, spite of the detestable war-faction in France and its disgraceful press; whose constant endeavors are exerted to drive their own prudent monarch and his ministers into acts injurious to the honor and interests of Great Britain. Both countries, however, contain numerous individuals of high talent and benevolent views; and in both peace societies are established, comprising many such persons, with some from the highest ranks also, in their lists; whose main object is to promote the principles of good will toward men, which the great author of Christianity came to establish: when these admirable institutions shall have increased sufficiently to bring a strong moral force to bear on their respective governments, then may we expect to see the reign of peace commence upon earth; then will the two greatest and most intelligent nations of the world

discover, that they may reap, from friendly intercourse, advantages far beyond any which the most successful war could procure for either. Strange to say, some of the earliest, most enlightened, and most active agents in these praiseworthy institutions, exist among the citizens of the North American republic.

The brief and imperfect outline which has been given of the transactions of this session, is sufficient to show, that in no preceding period of equal length was so much undertaken, or so much accomplished: the spirit of the reform bill was honestly allowed to act in correcting abuses which affected our institutions: while the utmost care was taken, lest the spirit of liberty should be extinguished in the rest of Europe: a great majority in the commons were found to be partisans, neither of ministers nor of opposition, but of good government; and when the session closed, on the twenty-ninth of August, the king justly observed, in his speech, that 'it was not more remarkable for extended duration, than for the patient and persevering industry, which parliament had displayed in many laborious inquiries, and in perfecting the various legislative measures brought under its consideration.'

On the twelfth of January, 1834, lord Grenville was released by death from scenes of earthly ambition and political contention; when the university of Oxford, which had of lately ejected one of the two great leaders in the cause so catholic emancipation from his place of representative in parliament, for advocating that cause, now offered the vacant place of chancellor to the other leader, field-marshal the duke of Wellington.

Ille crucem sceleris pretium tulit, hic diadema.

His grace accepted the invitation on the twenty-ninth; was elected without a competitor, and was installed in June following.

On the fourth of February, his majesty opened the session with a speech, in which, among other matters, he alluded to the slavery abolition bill, introduced last year; stating, that the manner in which that beneficent measure had been received throughout the colonies, and the progress made in carrying it into effect by the legislature of Jamaica, afforded just grounds for anticipating the happiest results. Among several important subjects still calling for consideration, he enumerated reports from the commissioners appointed to inquire into the state of municipal corporations, into the administration of the

poor-laws, and into the ecclesiastical revenues of England and Wales; by which parliament might be enabled to judge of the nature and extent of existing defects or abuses, and in what manner any necessary corrections might, in due season, be safely and beneficially applied. The chief point in our foreign policy related to the government of Spain: 'on the death of the late king,' said his majesty, 'I did not hesitate to recognise the succession of his infant daughter; and I shall watch with great solicitude the progress of events, which may affect a government, the peace of which is of the first importance to this country, and to the general tranquillity of Europe.'

On the motion for an address in the house of lords, the whole policy of government, domestic and foreign, was vehemently attacked by the duke of Wellington; who felt indignant that Don Miguel had not been recognised by our government as king of Portugal; but he was ably answered by earl Grey. In the commons, amendments were moved by Messrs. Hume and O'Connell; and colonel Evans, while he applauded the system of our neutrality regarding Portugal, expressed his hopes, that the commercial relations, which Prussia was establishing with many German states for the exclusion of British manufactures, would attract the attention of government.

Reform of parliament had not stilled the waves of civil tumult. A meeting of the trade unions of the metropolis was held on the twenty-first of April in Copenhagen-fields, for the purpose of marching in procession to the office of the home department, with a petition in favor of certain offenders who had been convicted at the Dorchester assizes, of administering unlawful oaths: and this procession, consisting of near 30,000 persons in the streets of London, collected vast crowds, and created much alarm. Lord Melbourne, the home secretary, refused to receive this petition under circumstances of such tumult, and the persons intrusted with it were obliged to retire: but on the twenty-fourth, the petition was presented by a small deputation and laid before the king in the usual manner. After Mr. O'Connell had prepared the way during the previous part of this session, he made his motion to repeal the union between Great Britain and Ireland on the twenty-second of April; declaring that there never existed a greater mistake, than to suppose that England possessed any right of dominion over the latter country. Having maintained, at great length, the incompetency of parliament to pass the act of union, and having detailed the dishonourable means by which it was accomplished, he proceeded to prove, that the

financial and legislative terms on which the great question had been settled, were in their very nature fraudulent and unjust: looking at these circumstances, he dreaded the probable consequences of a continuance of this union; though he thought the connexion between the two countries might still be kept up, on principles of international right and justice, under the British crown: Ireland, he said, had been hitherto governed, not by constitutional law, but in a spirit of despotism; therefore he demanded a restoration of her national legislature. He was answered at great length, and with equal ability, by Mr. Spring Rice; who, having enumerated the manifold advantages gained by Ireland from the union, which had been the source of much commercial prosperity, and had released that country from the tyranny of its wealthier classes, declared, that he did not consider this a contest for victory;—a far more valuable stake was at issue: to repeal the union, and at the same time expect to maintain a profitable connexion between the two countries, was contrary to all experience and principles of government: in such a case, constitutional monarchy would be overthrown, and succeeded by a fierce democracy: the people of Ireland were not prepared for a domestic legislature; power would be abused, party spirit would increase in rancor, and the rash measure would be followed by a total subversion of the empire: he moved, therefore, an address to his majesty, expressing a fixed determination of the commons to maintain inviolate the legislative union between Great Britain and Ireland; a determination, to be justified, not only on general grounds, but by reasons of special application to Ireland itself; declaring also, that while that house endeavored to remove all just causes of complaint alleged by the Irish people, it would promote every well-considered measure of rational liberty. A similar view of the subject was taken by sir Robert Peel; who declared, that there were convictions to which the feelings of the heart applied as strongly as the faculties of the mind; and on this point he repeated the exclamation of Mr. Canning:—‘Repeal the union! re-enact the heptarchy!’ The security of our empire depended on the maintenance of that union, without which England would be reduced to the condition of a fourth-rate power, and Ireland to the desolation of a wilderness. Nature herself proclaimed the folly of such a scheme: to preserve the existence of these islands as a leading state in Europe, it was absolutely necessary that they should be governed by one supreme head, and one supreme legislature: their union had now endured thirty-three years; within which period the

events of centuries had been crowded, and Great Britain alone, of all European states, remained safe from foreign aggression; her armies joining in one common exertion, and glorying in one common victory: during that period, the legislature had been guided by the wisdom of Pitt and Castlereagh, of Fox and Grattan; while the British army was under the command of Wellington, who, with his back to the sea, on the rock of Lisbon, saw Europe in dismay; but never ceased from his glorious labors till the whole continent was emancipated. The amendment for addressing his majesty was carried by 523 votes against 38 for the original motion; the minority, with a single exception, consisting of Irish members. On the thirtieth of April, the commons, in a conference, communicated their address to the lords; who, in one spirit, unanimously concurred in its sentiments, and ordered the blank, which was purposely left, to be filled up with the words 'lords spiritual and temporal;' it was then presented, as a joint memorial to the king, who expressed, in his answer, the great satisfaction with which he had received the solemn and united declaration of both houses to maintain the union inviolate; his determination to exercise fearlessly and faithfully powers vested in him, for the protection of his subjects against all attempts to produce a division of the realm; and his anxiety to remove all just causes of complaint, as well as to sanction every well-considered measure of improvement.

A very unreasonable share of the time of parliament continued to be taken up by the discussion of Irish affairs, and the disputes of Irish members. In offering an open and determined resistance to the demand of the agitators for a repeal of the union, ministers carried along with them the sense and feeling of the people: that was a question on which scarcely any man differed from the government, except O'Connell and his adherents; but questions connected with the Irish church stood in a different light. The agitators supported repeal, as a measure tending, not more to perpetuate their own domination, than to secure the downfall of the protestant establishment: many, likewise, who resisted repeal, still demanded changes and curtailments in that establishment, considering it as the principal cause of all the turbulence and misery which afflicted Ireland: others, again, who disliked it, not because it was a protestant, but because it was a religious establishment, inveighed against what they termed an unhallowed connexion between church and state, and the practical injustice of compelling persons of one creed to support the institutions of

another; and these were ready to attack, not only the revenues, but the very existence of the Irish church, as a first step toward the destruction of that of England. Union in the cabinet, with a firm determination not to be driven farther than they themselves were inclined to go, might have rendered ministers sufficiently strong to defy such destructive reformers; but on this question the cabinet itself was unfortunately divided: one portion, numerically the strongest, seemed inclined to admit the principle of appropriation, which they had repudiated in the bill of last session, by withdrawing the clause in which it was contained; but the minority, however willing to remove striking and useless inequalities in the distribution of ecclesiastical revenue, and to adopt measures which would prevent irritating collisions in its collection, resisted, on principle, a transfer of it to other purposes; refusing to acquiesce in any proposals for making the protestant establishment dependent on the comparative strength or weakness of the Romish church.

This discordance of opinion, and the impropriety of so soon impugning the settlement of last session, would have prevented ministers from voluntarily starting the subject; but it was forced on them by a numerous and clamorous party, which made up in fury and zeal for deficiency in knowledge and discretion; and which declared, that in attempting to shield the Irish church, they were apostatizing from the great principles of reform: when, therefore, Mr. Ward's motion came on, for reducing the temporalities of that church, as exceeding the spiritual wants of the protestant population, a schism took place in the cabinet: ministers, pressed by difficulties on all sides, were anxious to get rid of the proposal by appointing a commission, to inquire into the state of the Irish church: such an expedient, however, necessarily implied, that if facts turned out in a particular way, there would be no longer any opposition to Mr. Ward's principles; and the consequence was, that Mr. Stanley, colonial secretary, and sir James Graham, first lord of the admiralty, resigned office; their example being soon followed by the duke of Richmond and the earl of Ripon.

On this occasion, that firm friend of a reforming ministry, lord Ebrington, got up an address to earl Grey, signed by many members of the house of commons, entreating him to retain his place, and expressing their unabated confidence in him, as the only minister on whom the country could safely rely. His lordship, in reply, announced his intention of making

any personal sacrifice, in support of those principles on which his administration was founded; but he was obliged to admit the embarrassment and mischief produced by a reckless desire shown for innovation; while he deprecated that 'constant and active pressure from without,' in favor of measures, the necessity of which had not been fully proved, and which were not strictly regulated by attention to settled institutions in church and state. 'On no other principles,' he justly observed, 'could this or any other administration be conducted with advantage or safety.' Too many persons, even of his own party, were inclined to blame earl Grey, for the stand which he made against downward movements, after the reform bill had passed; attributing to aristocratic pride what was due to consistency of character and principles of independence. When that species of aristocratic pride, which consists in a preference of conviction and consistency to power and place, shall be extinct in Great Britain, what will be left to distinguish her from countries which have only imitated her free institutions?³ The vacant offices were soon filled up: the marquis of Conyngham became postmaster-general, and the earl of Carlisle privy seal; lord Auckland succeeded sir James Graham at the admiralty; and Mr. Spring Rice, whose sprightly talents, and aptitude for business had long marked him as a man destined to rise in the state, was made colonial secretary in place of Mr. Stanley: Mr. Abercrombie and Mr. Cutlar Fergusson, the latter of whom had not previously held office, were appointed respectively master of the Mint and judge-advocate; Mr. Robert Grant being knighted and sent to India as governor of Bombay; and Mr. Poulett Thompson being made president, instead of vice-president, of the board of trade.

While the cabinet was thus shaken by internal dissensions, publicity was given to a declaration made by the king to the Irish prelates, which seemed to announce, that his majesty would not regard any designs against their church with greater favor than the retired ministers had shown. When the house

³ They who aim at depreciating the political character of lord Grey, might perhaps attack it with a fairer show of reason, if they instanced the very imperfect manner in which he redeemed his pledge of retrenchment in the public expenditure, confining it, as he did, chiefly to the salaries of a few overworked clerks; or if they noticed the exercise of his ministerial patronage, which filled almost every department of the state with his own relations and connexions.

met again on the second of June, lord Althorp informed them that a lay commission had been appointed to inquire into the whole state of church property and church affairs throughout Ireland; also into those of Roman catholics and dissenters; into the number of schools in each parish, and the different religious persuasions of those that attended them: the minutest investigation of church property was to be made; and the proportion of protestants, catholics, and dissenters set down. No ministers would have advised such a measure as this, without being prepared to act on that report, as circumstances should point out, and as the information procured should warrant: accordingly, his lordship trusted, that Mr. Ward, satisfied with what government had done, would withdraw his motion: the honorable member, however, refused this request, because he must press for a recognition of the principle; especially as, from what he saw passing around him, he was afraid ministers would not continue long in office; and the commission would be inoperative. Lord Althorp then moved, as an amendment, the previous question; chiefly on the ground, that of all propositions, this was one which required much previous inquiry and detailed information: he had never swerved from the principle, that an established church ought to be maintained; and it was because he thought the result of inquiry would be favorable, that he had joined in recommending the commission: he was convinced, that to apply its surplus revenues to moral and religious education, would tend to advance the interests, both of our establishment and of protestantism generally; but he did not see the propriety or utility, before members possessed the requisite information, of asserting a right, which he was confident the house would exercise whenever a case for its interference was made out. After a long debate, the amendment was carried by 396 votes against 120; and the majority would have been still larger, had not many conservative members, unwilling to assume even the appearance of tampering with this question, left the house before the division.

Ministers, in the mean time, had been proceeding with a bill to amend the tithe system in Ireland, extinguishing tithe as a payment to be demanded in kind, and laying the burden, directly at least, on a different class of payers, in the shape of a land tax: the moderate members reserved their opinion of this measure until its details should be more fully known; but Mr. O'Connell, followed by Messrs. O'Connor, Sheil, Grattan, and other declared enemies of a protestant establishment,

immediately attacked it with unmeasured violence: their motive was obvious; for the ministerial plan did not abolish tithe altogether, which was the object now aimed at by the agitators: the landlords of Ireland, it was said, must look to themselves; for the principle on which opposition to tithes had hitherto been conducted, would soon be applied to rents; since the people would not regard the present measure as the slightest alleviation of their misery. O'Connell proposed, that two-thirds of the existing tithe should be abolished; the remaining third being left as a quit-rent on the land: after providing for the life-interest of present incumbents, he would apply the produce to relieving the landlord from grand jury assessments, to the support of charities, and to other public purposes. This plan was characterised by lord John Russell as one of direct robbery and spoliation, which would be advantageous to none but landowners: on a division, the original resolution was carried by 219 against 42; and a bill, founded on it, was brought in. When its second reading was moved, certain alterations were introduced to conciliate Irish members; but their opposition continued, and increased in violence; for with them no plan could be favorably accepted which did not recognise the principle of despoiling the protestant church: the second reading, therefore, was not carried without long debates and various manœuvres; while the conservative members who spoke were generally inclined to carry the bill into committee: their objection to it was, not that it left too much to the clergy, but that it took too much from them; yet they deemed it necessary to support ministers, in order to prevent worse measures from being brought forward: they also believed that the money to be secured by the present measure was to be applied exclusively to purposes of the church; although this belief was somewhat shaken by the language of lord John Russell, who stated that he understood the bill to be one for securing a certain fund appropriated to religious and charitable purposes; and if parliament found it was not so applied, it would be its duty to consider about a new appropriation: he thought the revenues of the Irish church much larger than the religious instruction of the protestant population, or the safety of the church required: when therefore this property was once successfully vindicated against those who unjustly withheld it, he would be prepared to do justice to Ireland; for if ever a people had reason to complain of a grievance, it was the people of that country, in relation to the present appropriation of tithes. These sentiments were

hailed by the Roman catholic party, as an approaching concession of all they had demanded.

When the bill went into committee, interminable debates ensued, and various alterations were made; but on a resolution moved by Mr. Littleton,—‘that for any deficit which might arise in the sums accruing to the commissioners of woods and forests, out of the land-tax or rent-charges, payable for the composition of Irish tithes, to the payment of which the consolidated fund was pledged, that fund should be indemnified from the revenues in the hands of the ecclesiastical commissioners, and out of the perpetuity purchase fund, placed at their disposal by the act of the last session, intituled the Irish church temporalities act,’—Mr. Stanley attacked the measure, and the proceedings of his former colleagues, in the most violent and unmeasured language: believing that government, which he compared to a set of *thimble-rig players* at a country fair, was committing injustice, and would yet fail in its aim; that the country was against this injustice; and that Ireland, after it had been perpetrated, would not be more tranquil,—he would take the sense of the committee on the resolution now proposed. After lord Althorp had replied to this truculent attack of his late colleague, Mr. Hume moved an amendment; which, after a sharp debate, was thrown out, and the ministerial resolution carried by 235 votes against 171: at this stage, however, the progress of the bill was arrested for a time by circumstances, to which it becomes necessary to advert.

In the preceding session it had been found requisite to pass what was termed the coercion bill; to put down, if possible, that insurrectionary violence and combination, which filled Ireland with crimes and misery: the act was to expire in August this year; and ministers, instigated by information received, had determined to propose its renewal, with the omission of those parts that related to the trial of offenders in certain cases by courts-martial: there were, however, other provisions in the bill, which the agitators viewed with still greater dislike; as interfering with their own influence, by preventing those meetings, which enabled them to work on the ignorance and passions of the multitude: to escape from these restrictions, was much more important to them, than that the peasant should have the benefit of a jury, or of an investigation by the civil magistrate: the lord lieutenant had recommended, that the whole act should be renewed, with the exception of the clause relative to courts-martial; but on the twenty-third of June, lord Grey received from him a letter, intimating that

the provision against public meetings might also be dispensed with. What influence or suggestions might have been used with the marquis Wellesley, to induce this change of opinion, became afterwards the subject of much discussion; but certain members of the cabinet appeared to have been corresponding with him without the knowledge of earl Grey; the object of their communications being, to smoothe the path of ministers in the house of commons, through concessions to O'Connell and his party: his lordship, who dissented intirely from these views, immediately wrote to the lord lieutenant, to reconsider the subject, taking nothing into account but what was fitting for Ireland; and lord Wellesley concluded his correspondence, by adhering to his recommendation; more especially, if, by means of such omission, an extension of the term for the act could be obtained. When the subject was brought before the cabinet, its members were divided in opinion; and the minority, consisting of lord Althorp, Mr. C. Grant, Mr. Spring Rice, Mr. Ellice, and Mr. Abercrombie,⁴ objected to a renewal of the clauses in question; though they acquiesced in the determination of the majority, that the bill should be proposed in the form desired by the premier. On its second reading, lord Durham objected to the clauses regarding public meetings; when earl Grey declared his dissent from him to be absolute: and that, if he could not have proposed the bill with those clauses, he would not have proposed it at all; for without them, it would be ineffectual, impolitic, and cruel; punishing the miserable victims of delusion, but letting those escape, who, whatever may have been the cause, had of late years supplied Ireland with fuel for agitation and disturbance: in these sentiments the lord chancellor coincided; thinking it would be strange if attention should not be given to the cause of excitement, as well as to the parties excited: the bill, having been thus read without any serious opposition, the committee was fixed for the seventh of July; but in the mean time, disclosures were made in the house of commons, which stopped its progress in its present shape, and overturned the minister who had proposed it. Mr. Littleton, the Irish secretary, had committed the fatal error of negotiating, unknown to the head of the government, with O'Connell; and, for the purpose of soothing, had entrusted him with certain views and determinations of the cabinet; the great agitator having, in an address to the electors of the county of Wexford, fulminated threats and denunciations against the whig ministry; imploring

⁴ See Annual Register for 1834, p. 102.

the reformers of Great Britain to come forward, and 'teach the insane dotard, now at the head of administration, that Englishmen and Scotchmen were alive to the sufferings of Ireland,'—Mr. Littleton, instead of meeting such a temper with uncompromising firmness, preferred to make Mr. O'Connell a confidant, and to give assurances, or, at least, to encourage expectations, for which he had no authority: he seems to have expected some communication from the lord-lieutenant regarding the omission of the clauses; hence he resolved, before the minister or cabinet had made any decision, to communicate to him, under the seal of secrecy and confidence, the sentiments of the Irish government; and to communicate it as ensuring a similar determination on the part of ministers: he spoke of the propriety of doing this to lord Althorp, who saw no harm in it, but entreated him to use extreme caution, and by no means to commit himself. Under such circumstances, Mr. Littleton sent for O'Connell, on the twentieth of June, and made the desired communication, with an assurance, that only a short measure, for repressing agrarian disturbances, would be proposed; also, that if the coercion bill was again thought necessary, it should not be introduced by him: in consequence of which interview, the agitator, having promised secrecy, and support to ministers in putting down disturbances, withdrew the repeal candidate, whom he had started for Wexford with every prospect of success.

To the dismay of Mr. Littleton, the minister and majority of the cabinet, contrary to the suggestions of the lord lieutenant, determined to retain the clause respecting public meetings; and the Irish secretary was compelled to belie his confidential communication, after having brought ministers into a state of inextricable embarrassment: he communicated, however, to Mr. O'Connell, the impossibility of those hopes, which he had held out, being realised; but begged him to take no public notice of this, until he should have seen earl Grey's speech introducing the bill: O'Connell declared, that he then remarked to the Irish secretary, that, if he did not resign, he would be guilty of deception; and that Mr. Littleton answered; 'Say nothing of that to-day,' or 'Wait till to-morrow:' but with regard to the fact, whether such an answer was or was not given, the two gentlemen publicly averred before the house, each on his honor, that what the other stated was not consistent with truth.

Mr. O'Connell thought he had been deceived, and was no longer bound to secrecy: he was in possession of the secret,

that the Irish government was, at least, not friendly to this unpopular measure; he knew well the advantageous position which he had thus gained for opposing it, and the difficulties in which government would be involved by the disclosure of its own dissensions, and of the fact, that many of its members were acting in opposition to their convictions in a matter which concerned the constitutional rights of the people: on the third of July, therefore, two days after the bill had been introduced in the lords, he put to Mr. Littleton many annoying questions; and having driven him to declare, that whoever might bring in the bill, he would vote for it, asserted that he (Mr. O'Connell) had been egregiously deceived: Mr. Littleton was then under the necessity of detailing the whole proceedings; and a very angry discussion ensued. Two days afterwards, the honorable gentleman tendered his resignation, which was refused; his colleagues, as lord Althorp stated, on the seventh of July, valuing his services too highly so to dispense with them.

On that day, the coercion bill passed through committee in the lords without alteration; and on the same evening, in the commons, lord Althorp, for the purpose of announcing its approach, presented papers relative to the state of Ireland, and moved for their being printed: this of course led to a discussion on the sentiments of the cabinet, and the change of opinion manifested by lord Wellesley; after which, O'Connell, who was more violent and abusive than ever, moved an amendment, that the papers should be referred to a select committee; and when this was rejected by a large majority, he gave notice for the production of so much of the lord lieutenant's correspondence, as would explain the reason why he opposed a renewal of the coercion act on or about the twentieth of June.

Lord Althorp, now probably supposing that it would be impossible to carry the bill through in its original form, and not expecting it to remain a secret that he himself had been opposed to a renewal of the restrictive clause, sent in his resignation; nor, after a personal interview with lord Grey, could he be induced to recall it, and appear in the unenviable light of a cabinet minister submitting to conduct measures which suspended the constitution, contrary to his own conviction of their necessity: the resignation, however, of the chancellor of the exchequer involved that of earl Grey. The premier convinced himself that it was impossible for him to proceed, when deprived of lord Althorp's assistance; and finding that the latter could not be dissuaded from his purpose, he gave in his own resignation, which his majesty accepted:

no others, however, followed; though, while lord Brougham had been stating to the lords, that he, at least, had no intention to retire, and that the only seceders were lords Grey and Althorp, the latter announced in the house of commons, that 'the administration was at an end.' This, however, was not the case: instead of seeking a premier to construct a new cabinet, the members of the old one resolved to remain together, and select a new head: lord Melbourne, therefore, the home secretary, was elevated to this post, and kissed hands, on the sixteenth of July, as first lord of the treasury:⁴ to obtain the co-operation, however, of lord Althorp, the new premier was obliged to declare that ministers did not intend to proceed with the coercion bill now before parliament; but that another measure, omitting certain clauses contained in the former, would be introduced in the lower house. Thus the great agitator exhibited his power, not only in throwing out that prime minister who was most influential in resisting 'the pressure from without;' but in compelling the majority of the cabinet, under his successor, to relax those restrictive clauses which were to impose fetters on his own powers of agitation. Lord Melbourne's announcement of the new bill on the seventeenth of July, produced an irregular, but vehement discussion, in which the conduct of government, and some of its individual members, was assailed by the earl of Wicklow, lord Wharncliffe, the dukes of Wellington and Buckingham, and other peers; who maintained, that since the revolution, no instance had occurred of such inconsistency and tergiversation: the modified coercion bill, however, was introduced by lord Althorp on the eighteenth of July; and, having been rapidly carried through the commons, passed the lords on the twenty-ninth, under a strong protest signed by the dukes of Cumberland and Wellington, with twenty-one other peers.

Ministers, having thus provided for the tranquillity of Ireland, by what they considered enactments of sufficient energy and severity, now returned to what was intended as the great recompense of her temporary subjection to a strained power of the law: accordingly, the order of the day, on the twenty-ninth, was read for the house of commons to resolve itself into a committee on the tithe bill. Mr. O'Connell immediately moved, as an amendment, that this should take place that

⁴ He was succeeded by viscount Duncannon; and sir John Cam Hobhouse was placed at the head of the woods and forests, with a seat in the cabinet: lord Carlisle soon afterwards resigned the privy seal, and was succeeded by the earl of Mulgrave.

day six months; on the ground, that it was preposterous to go at so late a period of the session into committee on a bill containing 122 clauses, relative to a matter so complicated and difficult: this amendment, however, only obtained fourteen voices in its favor; though others were carried in committee, which went to alter the operation and consequences of the bill: lord Melbourne, on moving its second reading in the upper house, gave the peers clearly to understand, that, if it was lost, government would propose no other grant to relieve the Irish clergy. Although he admitted, that there might be reasons for viewing with jealousy and distrust the quarter whence certain alterations, made in the bill subsequently to its original introduction, proceeded; yet he did not think the arrangement itself bad for the church: the tithe, in future, was to be received by the crown, and paid by the landlord; who, in return for the burden thus imposed on him, was to have a deduction of two-fifths, or forty per cent. of the original composition: the incomes of the clergy, however, were not to bear the whole deduction, which was only to be twenty-two and a half per cent. on them; that is, twenty per cent. for increased security, and two and a half per cent. for the expenses of collection: incumbents therefore would receive £77 10s. for every £100, without trouble, without the risk of bad debts, and without any of that odium which had hitherto attended the collection of tithes. Another consequence was, that the clergy would be relieved from the repayment of sums already advanced to them from the treasury; as that charge would be laid on the landlord: the revision of existing compositions, made under the acts of 1823 and 1832, seemed to him also a proper enactment. The bill underwent a complete discussion; the tory lords seeing no security for the rights and interests of the Irish clergy, in yielding to what they considered an act of injustice; while their opponents thought that the clerical body would find it more advantageous to obtain the sum proposed without risk, than to recover a smaller, if they recovered any at all, through scenes of blood and slaughter: 'but the bill,' said lord Brougham, 'was to be rejected, because Mr. O'Connell approved of it, and had amended it: that was to say, a man whom they disliked had only to advise them how to save the country from civil war, in order to ensure the rejection of such a suggestion! It was very easy for such politicians to say,—Am I to degrade myself by taking a leaf out of Mr. O'Connell's book? Shall I permit him to dictate to me?

But he did dictate to them; and the only difference was;—that instead of taking the thing honestly and directly as a beneficial suggestion, they submitted to take the law from him, by enabling him to decide what they should not do.’

The earl of Ripon and the duke of Richmond wished the bill to go into committee, with an intention of restoring it to its original state; and if unsuccessful there, they would vote against its third reading: on a division, however, the second reading was rejected by a majority of sixty-seven: the Irish clergy were thus thrown on the charity of the British public, by whom a very large subscription was made to relieve their distress. A bill brought in at this time was passed to amend and extend the Irish temporalities act of the preceding session, under which the church cess was to be abolished.

But it was not the church of Ireland alone that engrossed attention: the dissenters of England, forming a numerous body, and possessing, in many instances, great respectability, wealth, and influence, became anxious, not only to obtain those privileges, from which, as religionists, they were excluded; but to be relieved from the necessity of supporting an establishment, in the advantages of which they did not participate: in accordance with these views, various petitions were presented by them to parliament, in the beginning of the session, praying to be relieved from church rates; and, in many instances, urging the separation of church and state, or recommending the general establishment of the voluntary system: nor did they want supporters in parliament; since to those, whose opinions rested on an honest belief, were added many who looked merely at the rich prize which might be gained in church property, if the establishment could be overthrown; beside all who professed that no religious creed should be established; and those who wished to use the spirit of innovation as a political engine, gradually undermining old political institutions. These petitions led to no other result than that of producing a strong expression of opposite opinion, and calling forth numerous anti-petitions, praying parliament to preserve the church inviolate: ministers also fulfilled their declarations, that they would listen to no proposition for its destruction: nevertheless, a motion made by Mr. Rippon, the new member for Gateshead, to expel bishops from the house of lords, under the modest plea of relieving them from the duties of legislation, found fifty-eight voices, in a house consisting of 183 members; and the announcement was hailed with loud cheers and acclamations.

Among the grievances of which dissenters complained in their numerous petitions, none were more strongly dwelt on than their practical exclusion from degrees at Oxford and Cambridge, in consequence of being required to sign a declaration of conformity with the church of England, or to subscribe her articles: they demanded, as a matter of civil right, that religious tests should be abolished, and the universities thrown open for education, and a certain extent of graduation, to men of any creed. It was clear that their chance of success would be greatly increased, if they could state a feasible case of concurrent opinion in these learned bodies themselves; and fortune at this time favored their exertions at Cambridge. Great pains had been lately taken by some of the medical professors in that university, to advance the interests of their particular science; and being alarmed at the exertions made in the metropolis, not only to establish a medical school, but to obtain the power of granting degrees, they felt anxious to ward off the mischief which might thence accrue to their Alma Mater, by opening their doors wider to students of medicine: for this purpose, however, it was necessary to admit others with them into the sanctuary; and as a considerable body existed in the senate, who thought the time had now arrived when dissenters from the established church might safely be admitted to such academical degrees as were unconnected with theology; and who, instead of seeing danger to our establishment from the introduction of a few young men of the higher class of dissidents into the academical body, thought rather that the dissenting community had reason to fear for the conversion of their own youth, when brought into the desired association;—a petition was got up without much difficulty, and signed by sixty-three resident members of the senate, praying for an abolition of religious tests offered to candidates for degrees in arts, law, and physic: at the same time, in making this request, the petitioners stated, ‘that they were only asking for a restitution of their ancient laws and laudable customs; since the restrictions complained of were imposed on the university in the reign of James I.; most of them in a manner informal and unprecedented, and grievously against the wishes of many then members of the senate; in times of bitter party animosities, and during the prevalence of dogmas both in church and state, which are at variance with the present spirit of English law, and with the true principles of christian toleration.’

This petition, which simply asked the removal of subscription,—neither seeking the admission of dissenters as such, nor their participation in college fellowships, nor any change on their account in lectures or discipline,—was presented on the twenty-first of March by earl Grey in the lords, and on the twenty-fourth by Mr. Spring Rice in the commons; being considered as a convenient instrument to try the temper of the two houses, and ascertain the views of different parties, by the discussion which it was sure to produce: as the subject, however, seemed new to parliament, no motion was made till after the Easter recess; when colonel Williams moved an address to his majesty, praying him to signify his royal pleasure to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, that those bodies should act no longer under the edicts or letters of James I. 1616: it was, however, thought, for many reasons, more advisable to proceed by bill; and Mr. Wood, one of the members for Preston, moved an amendment to that effect, which was carried by one hundred and eighty-five to forty-four.

Though the Cambridge petition had been presented in both houses by members of the cabinet, and government had declared its intire concurrence in the prayer of the petitioners, no proposition on the subject was brought forward by ministers: favorable as they were to this measure of relaxation, they expressed hopes, that, as a portion of one of the universities was already inclined to it, the object, if not pressed too eagerly, might be effected with the concurrence of both those learned bodies, in a much better form, and to much better purpose, than if they were made to act reluctantly under the compulsion of a statute: they wished therefore that neither parliament nor government should be driven to interfere in the business, before there was a prospect of terminating it in the best and most satisfactory manner: the dissenters, however, and their partisans took the matter into their own hands, and pressed it on with such unseemly violence, as soon disgusted their best friends: ministers would not run the risk of preventing them; but took no lead in the measure, though they supported it by their speeches and votes.

Before the bill was brought in, the sentiments of the great mass in the two academical bodies became fully expressed: it was soon discovered, that the sixty-three petitioners at Cambridge, by offending the honest principles of many, and the rancorous party-spirit of a few, had raised a storm which

no argument or explanation, though it engaged some of the ablest pens in that university, could allay. Meetings were held almost daily, pamphlets were showered forth like hail, the public journals gave up their pages to the contest, and the university pulpit resounded with the most awful denunciations: during the excitement thus provoked, a counter-petition was signed by 258 members, resident and non-resident, comprising eleven heads of houses, eight professors, and twenty-nine tutors; while a second was signed by 755 undergraduates and bachelors of arts: these were presented, on the twenty-first of April, by the duke of Gloucester, as chancellor of the university, in the house of lords; and by Mr. Goulburn, one of its representatives, in the house of commons. On the ninth of May, Mr. Estcourt presented a similar document from the university of Oxford; and a second petition was sent from Cambridge, signed by 1000 members of the senate, who had not signed the other.

Although Mr. Wood brought in his bill soon after the Easter holidays, it was not till the twentieth of June that he was enabled to move the second reading: Mr. Estcourt then proposed, as an amendment, that it should be read a second time that day six months: he argued, that the course of education pursued at Oxford and Cambridge was essentially a religious one, and the supporters of the bill could not succeed in their object without destroying the religious part of the system: this, indeed, he said, was the aim of the dissenters;—to introduce a system of education, which would lead to a dissolution of the connexion existing between church and state; or, in other words, to the destruction of our established religion. Mr. Herbert, who seconded the amendment, enforced the argument.—‘It had been suggested,’ he said, ‘that persons of all denominations might be taught the leading doctrines of morality and religion, without touching on debateable questions: but he doubted if this were possible; and he expected no advantage from so vague a system of theology,—an emasculated kind of instruction in christianity and morals, producing no feeling of confidence or reverence in the minds of its pupils: a bill like the present would operate as a direct exclusion of the clergy from the universities; and every parish in England would feel the consequences:’ in addition to this argument, the honorable gentleman asked, why the dissenters, who were an opulent and intelligent body, did not found colleges of their own, in which they might adopt that system which pleased them best; and if they hedged in their institutions with reli-

gious tests, calculated to exclude churchmen, the latter would not complain. The answer to this was given in the speech of Mr. Potter, who, with Messrs. Ewart and Poulter, spoke in favor of the bill; contending that the alteration required was necessary, no less for the benefit of the universities, than in justice to the dissenters: by the present system, the latter were impeded in their progress to the bar, by having to keep terms for five years instead of three; and were prevented from becoming fellows of the college of physicians, for want of academical degrees; and this could not be remedied by degrees of their own. With regard to subscription of the thirty-nine articles, it was said, that instead of ensuring sincerity in religion, it generated hypocrisy and indifference to religion altogether: it was also declared, that the exclusive principles of the universities, being no longer in accordance with the spirit of the age, could not be much longer preserved; especially when so large a body of dissenters had grown up, actuated by a desire of obtaining their just rights. Mr. C. W. Wynne was convinced that the present bill was but the first of a series of measures, which, if not checked in time, must lead to the subversion of the established church, and the destruction of all our institutions: on the other hand, Mr. Spring Rice complained, that it was unfair to treat the bill, not according to its own deserts, but in reference to other supposed measures, which might or might not be connected with that under discussion: in the course of his argument, he asked, what could be more inconsistent and unjust, than the practice now prevailing at Cambridge, where dissenters were admitted so far as instruction was concerned, but excluded from everything to which instruction ought to lead? they were admitted to the fullest and most complete course of study until the twelfth term; when, on being brought into fair competition with their fellow-students, the odious principle of exclusion intervened; and the dissenter was told, that however obedient he had been to college regulations, however high the eminence he had acquired, still he would not be allowed the badge or symbol of his acquirements, simply because he was a dissenter: he really thought, that so far from deteriorating or endangering the church establishment, the approximation of dissenters to its members in a course of education, might bring many within the pale of that church, who would otherwise continue to dissent from it; and he denied that the mixture of persons differing in religious persuasions at Cambridge, had been injurious, either to the university, or any other institution of the country.

The house had the benefit of experience; for in Dublin dissenters were admitted to degrees, though excluded from fellowships, and from all participation in the internal management of the university: and what mighty mischief had followed the admission? Was the university less orthodox in its principles, or less a protestant foundation than before? Had the zeal of its public instructors been lessened, or their sphere of usefulness narrowed, by this interference? It had been said, that the dissenters ought to found universities of their own: he concurred in that argument; but the English universities would not allow them to do so: when they proposed such a step, in order to educate the youth of their own persuasion, and reward them with those honors which the universities denied, and thus sought to secure to themselves academical honors and privileges; the universities stepped forward, and said,—‘We will not only exclude you from our own seats, but will also prevent you from enjoying the advantages and privileges of a university of your own.’ This double ground of exclusion and prohibition was what no one could defend.

The colonial secretary was answered by Mr. Goulburn, who argued, that in proportion as the advocates of this bill enforced the danger of excluding dissenters, they made manifest the ruinous consequences of concession: if the dissenters deemed it so great a hardship to be deprived of the empty honor of a degree, what would they say, if they were admitted to degrees, and found a bar raised against their admission to college emoluments and distinctions? When it is said by the right honorable gentleman, that Dublin afforded an example which they might safely follow, it was an unhappy one in itself, and unfairly stated: in Dublin, the degree conferred on its possessor no power of government, and on this point all the merits of the intended comparison turned: besides, an Irish member had a motion now on the order-book, requiring that dissenters should be placed on the same footing with members of the establishment, in respect to scholarships and fellowships in that university; and his plea was, that, as we were about to admit dissenters to degrees in England, he saw no reason why dissenters in Ireland should not have the advantages which those degrees conferred in England. In speaking of the course, pursued at Cambridge, the broad distinction had been forgotten;—that a dissenter was not admitted as such, but as a member of the university willing to submit to its regulations; and, till the period for taking his degree arrived, he followed the rules prescribed by that body: but, if he were brought to

college openly as a dissenter, either he was absolved from the restraints of religious discipline, or was forced to proclaim his own hypocrisy. Under the proposed bill, every class of dissenters, Jews, Turks, infidels, Socinians, men of any denomination, would be admissible to degrees: it repealed, *ipso facto*, all the statutes which regulated the internal government of colleges, and did away with all that religious attendance which had been justly lauded: now religious instruction should never be disjoined from general education; and there had been a time in our history, when opposite sentiments would have drawn down universal reprobation. The right honorable gentleman went on to show the evil consequences of a system of education without a religious test, drawn from foreign universities; and implored the house to abstain from depriving christianity of advantages which it derived from the discipline and constitution of our own—from dissevering religion and learning.

Mr. Stanley said, that when the first Cambridge petition was presented, he had been disposed to concur in its prayer, so far as might be consistent with the safety of our established church: but he would not conceal his feeling, that the tone subsequently assumed, and the principles asserted by dissenters, had tended to change in some respects his opinion, and rendered it necessary for the house to view their claims with more jealousy than before: still, he would vote for the principle of the bill; but not as declaring for a change in the system of university education. It was only in Oxford that subscription to the thirty-nine articles was required from a student entering the university: though a member of that university, he wished to see this part of the system altered; for he could not bring himself to believe in the gloss which had been put on it;—that such subscription was merely a matter of form; and that no real adhesion to those articles was implied, until the party was instructed in their meaning.

Sir Robert Peel, after a long speech, in which he characterised the bill as an enactment, intended to give to Jews, infidels, and atheists,—to the man who professed some religion, and to the man who professed none,—a statutable right of demanding admission into our universities; declared that, after a removal of all civil disabilities from dissenters, by the repeal of the corporation and test acts, and from Roman catholics, by the act of emancipation; and after a vast change effected by the reform bill in the constitution of parliament, the question at last was, were we, or were we not, to maintain an established

religion? In all those measures of relief alluded to, there was no intimation, that they would lead to farther demands, and lay a foundation for ulterior claims: to concede the demands now made, he asserted, would not be for the advantage of dissenters themselves; to whom, as well as to all christians, the preservation of the established church was an inestimable benefit; to protect them, as well from superstition on the one hand as from fanaticism on the other; and secure to them and their posterity the decent observance of divine worship, and the substantial benefits of toleration, which could be secured only by such an establishment. What, he asked, constituted the union between church and state? What was the essence of an established church? What, but a legislative recognition of it on the part of the state? Parliament, therefore, was intitled to say to the dissenters,—‘With that legislative recognition you shall not interfere.’

Sir R. H. Inglis and lord Sandon also opposed the bill, which was supported by lord Althorp, who strenuously contended, that by such support he would be guilty of no hostile act against the established church: he maintained, that interference with divine worship was no necessary consequence of the bill, neither would it interfere with the education of members of the church of England; for if it passed into a law, it would only intitle dissenters to take a degree without subscription to any articles of religion, or any declaration of faith; neither investing them with fellowships, nor with the power of instructing youth: for the principle therefore of the bill he was prepared to vote; and in committee all changes might be effected, for limiting that principle to the extent required: the house then divided, and the second reading was carried by 321 votes against 174. In committee, the speaker gave his decided opposition to the principle of the bill; and, some amendments having been made, it was read a third time, and passed, on the twenty-eighth of July, by a majority of 164 against 75. The earl of Radnor took charge of the bill in the house of lords, where the arguments for and against it did not vary from those used in the commons, so as to render a detail of them necessary. The duke of Gloucester, chancellor of the university of Cambridge, after denouncing the bill, not only as uncalled for, but most unjust and mischievous, moved, as an amendment, that it be read that day six months: his royal highness was followed by the duke of Wellington, chancellor of Oxford, who argued forcibly on the same side. Lord chancellor Brougham supported the bill, because he thought it went to remove a

practical grievance, without affecting the discipline of the universities, or the safety of the church; and the discussion was closed by a long and ingenious speech from the bishop of Exeter; when a division took place, and the amendment was carried by an overwhelming majority of 187, against 85 who voted for the second reading.

On this perplexing subject, it must be highly satisfactory to those who signed the first petition from Cambridge, to find their sentiments appreciated, and their judgment confirmed, by an eminent prelate, raised to the episcopal bench, with the approbation of all parties, wherever his extended reputation for the instruction of youth, and for the advancement of a sound and religious education, has reached. Speaking of the difficulties involved in the question, he observes;—‘They are greater on several accounts at the sister university, than at that to which I more especially belong, owing to subscription to the articles being required at Oxford from all students at their admission: this not being requisite at Cambridge *in limine*, has opened a more general access to that university; and having known it above forty years by actual residence, by frequent visits, and by constant communication with many of its tutors and heads of colleges, I must own, that I never knew or heard of any evil resulting from such facility: the sons of dissenters, of various denominations, have been, and now are educated there, in the same lecture-rooms, submit to the same discipline and regulations, and attend the same chapel service, as those whose parents are of the established church: I have known the sons of unitarian ministers admitted to examination for the same degree, and fairly earn the same honors at those examinations as the sons of clergymen of the establishment: so far, therefore, we must admit, that no invidious distinctions have been made, either in the instruction given, or in the rewards allotted to those who have profited by it: but surely it seems absurd to say to the dissenter,—we will allow you to attend our lectures, will examine you for a degree, and will assign to you, according to your proficiency and desert, such honors as we assign to our pupils of the established church; but the degree itself, for which we examine, you shall not have, unless you subscribe yourself a member of the church of England. Really, if consistency be of any value, it is preserved with greater dignity by that university which proscribes admission, *in limine*, to all who do not subscribe the articles; than by that, which tantalises, as it were, by admission and examination; and then disappoints the very encouragement it

has given, by withholding the fruit of those exertions which it has fostered and matured, at the very moment when it is to be gathered. On such grounds, therefore, had I been a resident member of the senate, I might have been induced to sign the Cambridge petition, which has been the source of so much discussion, and I fear, of so much disunion. It is but honest to add, that the subsequent avowals of our dissenting brethren would have given me cause to repent such a proceeding, without having stipulated for certain restrictions, by way of security to ourselves, which I should not previously have thought necessary.⁵

As ministers had been aided greatly in the last elections by the dissenters, this was thought a very convenient time by that body to push their pretensions; and, as they considered their liability to pay church rates a pressing grievance, they procured a motion to be made in the house of commons, by Mr. Divett, to relieve them from this compulsory payment: the mover utterly disclaimed all intention of interfering with tithes; for though he conceived that men, who dissented from a religious establishment, should not be compelled to pay for its support, he was himself a churchman, and thought he was doing the church good service, by striving to remove that which created enemies against her. Other members enforced the statements which he had made on this point; and according to them, the dissenters had become so formidable in numbers, that if practical grievances were not removed, the established church would possess little security. Lord Althorp said, that as he had himself given notice of a motion on this subject, and did not think the present a desirable occasion to adopt the principle contained in the resolution, he should move the previous question; but Mr. Divett expressed himself willing to wait for the appearance of the ministerial plan, and withdrew his motion. On the twenty-first of April, therefore, his lordship brought forward that plan, in the shape of a resolution, 'that after a fixed time, church rates should cease; and in lieu thereof, a sum, not exceeding £250,000, should be granted from the land-tax, to be applied as parliament might direct.' His intention he said, was to provide for the fabrics of the church, while he relieved dissenters: this scheme, however, did not suit their views; and their friends immediately attacked it with unmeasured violence, led on by Mr. Hume, who moved,

⁵ Charge delivered to the clergy of the archdeaconry of Derby, June the twenty-sixth, 1834, by the rev. S. Butler, D.D., F.R.S., afterwards bishop of Lichfield and Coventry.

that all the words in the resolution should be expunged, except those which declared, 'that church rates should cease and determine.' The proposal, they said, was a contemptible juggle, founded on the old financial principle, that if money were taken out of the pockets of the people by indirect means, they would not be sensible of their loss: the friends of the establishment also objected to the plan, because it questioned generally the rights of the church, infringed on some of them, and left others on a less sure foundation than before. At a division, indeed, the motion was carried by a majority of 256 against 140; but government determined to proceed no farther with the proposed measure: churchmen, however, considered that one advantage was gained, in the dissenters having been brought to disclose, somewhat prematurely, the real purposes which they had in view, and to proclaim opinions tending to the abolition of a religious establishment.

Ministers were equally unfortunate in another attempt to gratify the dissenters, by allowing them to celebrate the marriage ceremony in their own chapels, and thus escape what they called a grievous oppression,—the necessity of being married according to the rites of the establishment: a bill to this effect, brought in by lord John Russell, was refused, principally on the ground, that it required the banns to be published in a parish church; which, they said, involved a principle, that degraded them below their fellow-subjects.

The commutation of tithes in England was a subject still more complicated and difficult; for it involved so many interests of different kinds, and so many details requiring minute attention and technical precision, that the adjustment of any fair and incomplete scheme was a work requiring much time, patience, and circumspection. In moving a resolution to this effect, lord Althorp set out with two propositions, which he thought could not reasonably be denied; first, that whatever difference of opinion might exist as to the abstract right of tithes, they did not belong to the landlord: secondly, that the revenues of our established church were not larger than its purposes required: tithes therefore must be treated as property belonging to the church; and consequently they could not be taken away without a fair equivalent. Doubtless, it was often said, that if a fair equivalent was substituted, no relief would be granted to the occupier of the land: but this was a mistake; for there was in the mode of collection a source of irritation, with occasions of unpleasant collision, which would be avoided by commutation: beside this, the owners and occupiers of the soil

would be actually benefited; for where they had laid out their capital in its cultivation, they were often losers by the tithes being taken in kind.' After these just and pertinent observations, his lordship proceeded to develop his plan; but the principles and details of the proposed method of commutation were found to be so little palatable either to the clergy or the landholders, that the measure was dropped for the present.

One act, however, was carried this session, which is sufficient to signalise the administration under whose auspices it was brought forward. Soon after their accession to office, the present ministers had appointed a commission of inquiry into the state and operation of our poor-laws, as more likely to be effective than any parliamentary committee: these commissioners had made their report, and an abstract of the valuable evidence which they had taken had been printed in the course of the preceding session. That report impressed government with a strong conviction of the necessity of interference; which was maintained on the ground, that the present administration of those laws tended directly and indirectly to the destruction of all property; whilst even to the laboring classes, whom they had been intended to benefit, nothing could be more fatal than their continued operation. It was the abuse of the system, rather than the system itself, which was chiefly to be reprehended: its worst faults indeed were scarcely older than the beginning of the present century, and had originated in measures intended for the benefit of those, to whose welfare they were now most destructive: a feeling at that period extensively prevailed, that great discontent existed among the working classes; and a principle of legislation was adopted, in the thirty-sixth of George III., which, though very humane and well-intended, was found to produce the most baneful consequences: this principle was, that the relief to paupers ought to be given in such a manner, as to place them in a situation of comfort. Now, however desirable it might be to place all our countrymen in such a situation; yet to give relief in the manner prescribed by this statute, was the duty of private charity, and ought not to be provided for by a compulsory rate: the effect of the law was to empower magistrates to order relief to the poor in their own dwellings; and the principle, being followed up, led from bad to worse, until all feelings of independence on the part of laborers yielded to reckless indifference, and honest industry to miserable sloth; for it was soon seen that the careful and industrious man was no better off than the idlest

vagabond, who chose to marry and throw all the duties of a parent, and the burthen of providing for his children upon the parish: hence the little care and attention afterwards bestowed by those children upon their sick or aged parents; hence the frequency of these improvident marriages between boys and girls before they had obtained the slightest experience of life; hence also that enormous increase in the number of laborers which such marriages could not fail to produce; until it became evident, that instead of paupers being placed in a state of comfort, the whole laboring population, in many districts, had been brought into a state of deplorable misery and distress.

With regard to the law of settlement, as it now stood, it could scarcely be said to secure to the poor man a fixed abode, where, in case of accident or illness, he might make his wants known, and obtain assistance; for to decide to what parish he belonged, was very often so difficult, that he could not make it out himself, and lawyers every year received large sums for making it out in their own way: then it became a matter of such importance to a parish to avoid increasing the number of its poor, that every mode was adopted to prevent a person from obtaining a settlement in it; by which means a poor man was prevented from carrying his labor to the best market, where it was most wanted, and would procure the highest wages: hence he was compelled to remain in idleness and want, where no employment could be found, because it was that parish where he was supposed to have acquired his legal settlement: thus whilst one place was actually in want of laborers, it was prevented from taking them, whilst another place which had too many could not diminish the numbers. Was the existing mode then of granting relief good for the poor man? Surely not: for as the rate-payer could not spend his money twice over, what was paid in relief was necessarily deducted from wages; and thus an honest industrious laborer was driven to receive as a *bounty* from his parish what he ought to have claimed as a *right* from his employer: the debt due to his industry was converted into a donation to him as a pauper, and consequently did him harm by lessening his independence and lowering him amongst his fellow men.

The dangers incurred by leaving matters as they stood were so great and imminent, that although the length of time, during which this system had been going on, rendered caution requisite, it was absolutely necessary to meet the difficulties of the case, adopt sounder principles, and carry them unflinch-

ingly into execution: in fact, there were already some examples to be followed; for in about 100 parishes, the evils of the existing system had compelled the inhabitants to adopt an improved mode of administration; and in every instance the experiment had succeeded; while, under the old plan, even the cultivation of the soil, in some places, had been abandoned; so heavy was the pressure of rates, and so great the evils of mismanagement: the consequence was, that the support of their poor was thrown on neighbouring parishes; these too would soon be reduced to a similar state; and thus pauperism would stride with increasing rapidity through the land. It was from the nature of this growing mischief, and the necessity of checking it, that lord Althorp, when he brought forward his scheme on the seventeenth of April, defended the principle of entrusting the poor-laws to a board of commissioners: he admitted that it was an anomalous mode of legislation, and that the board would be invested with extraordinary powers; but this was rendered unavoidable by the necessity of the case. Our limits will not permit us to enter at large into the details of this most important bill; but it may be sufficient to notice its leading principles: these were, —to stop the system of allowances, or the making up artificially depressed wages out of the poor's-rate; to deprive magistrates of the power of ordering out-door relief to paupers; to alter, in certain cases, the constitution of parish vestries; to give large discretionary powers to the central commissioners; to simplify the law of settlement and removal, abolishing every mode of acquiring a settlement, except by birth or marriage, to render the mother of an illegitimate child liable to support it; and, for its aliment, to save from imprisonment the putative father, to whom she might swear it. In the debates on this measure, a few obstinate voices were raised against it, as against all kinds of alteration: many objections were made, especially to the great and alarming powers of the central board, and to the bastardy clause, which, throwing all the burden on the mother, became an inducement to infanticide: but the chancellor of the exchequer argued, in reply, that nothing had been stated which could be regarded as an ostensible reason for not going into committee, where all matters which had been noticed would be open to consideration. The second reading was carried by the immense majority of 319 to 20; some clauses were modified, and others added, in committee; and on the first of July the bill was passed by 187 votes against 52.

In the house of lords this bill found its most violent opponent in lord Wynford; who at the second reading moved as an amendment, that it be read that day six months; not, however, on the ground, that there was nothing in the administration of our poor-laws that required correction, but because he conceived that the remedies proposed were partly unnecessary and partly inefficient; while some were oppressive and tyrannical: besides, he thought there was not sufficient time remaining to discuss so intricate and important a question during the present season. The earl of Winchelsea, however, as well as the dukes of Richmond and Wellington, supported the second reading, though they did not approve all the provisions in the bill: the latter thought it was the duty of their lordships to avoid procrastination, and without further delay proceed with a measure, which, if necessary at all, was necessary now: the division gave seventy-six peers for the second reading, and only thirteen against it. In committee the central board was strongly attacked, especially by lord Wynford; but the chancellor, the duke of Wellington, and lord Winchelsea contended for its necessity. The bishop of Exeter pleaded eloquently in behalf of the unfortunate mother of an illegitimate child, and wished to make the father equally liable to its maintenance; or the survivor, in case of the death of either; but he was answered by his brother of London, who himself had been one of the commissioners; as well as by the lord chancellor, who contended that the law, as it yet stood, encouraged a detestable crime, second only to murder—that of wilful and corrupt perjury: at the third reading of the bill, however, an amendment was made in this clause, to recover money from the putative father, when the mother was unable to maintain the child: alterations also were effected in the allowance-system, and the provision of settlement; the prohibition of out-door relief was mitigated; and various other changes were introduced: but when lord Althorp, on the eleventh of August, moved the commons to agree to the amendments of the peers, a counter amendment was moved, that they should be read that day six months: this proposal was chiefly supported by those who were opposed to the bill altogether, or wished it to be delayed till next session; but his lordship observed, that if the bill did not pass this session, he would be a bold man who should try it in the next: the amendment, therefore, was rejected by a large majority; and every alteration was agreed to, except that which expunged the provision, intitling dissenting clergymen to enter work-

houses, for the purpose of giving religious instruction to inmates of their own persuasion: this was said to be a violation of the principle of religious liberty, and an insult to that small portion of good feeling toward dissenters which existed in the upper house. Thus was the great experiment of a revision and alteration of the poor-laws happily commenced: that it would please all parties, especially those whose condition it more immediately affected, who could expect? that, many cases of great individual hardship must occur, is a matter to be lamented: and, on this account, the remedial powers placed in the central board are peculiarly necessary: on the proper and humane exercise of those powers by the appointed guardians much will depend; for the complaints of the poor have been basely seized on and encouraged by designing persons, as means to serve political purposes; and at elections, the men, by whom this patriotic measure was carried, have found it used as a very powerful instrument in opposition to their interests.

From the change effected in the poor-laws, no class of men could eventually expect greater relief than the owners and occupiers of land: these, however, looked after means of alleviating the depression under which they labored, more immediate and direct in operation: the subject of agricultural distress was brought before the commons, in February, by the marquis of Chandos; who, after ably stating both the local and general causes of the evil, moved a resolution, 'that in any reduction of national burdens by the remission of taxes, due regard be shown to that distress which had been alluded to in the speech from the throne.' The chancellor of the exchequer, however, though he admitted the distress complained of by the agriculturists, contended that it was wrong to hold, that they derived no relief from what had been granted to the other interests of the country: the greatest relief which could be given to farmers would be that which affected the community in general; and to show that, wherever the reduction of taxes or imposts benefited manufactures or commerce, it had also aided agriculture, he instanced the price of wool, which had risen from ninepence to two shillings per pound: he could not agree, that the diminution or abolition of any particular impost would meet the agricultural distress which now prevailed: the small taxes payable by occupiers of land might be vexatious; but they did not press heavily on them; and far greater benefit would accrue from placing the poor-rates on a better footing, than from lightening the weight

of direct taxation. Several other members spoke against the resolution, not meaning to deny that the agriculturists were suffering, but considering the resolution as not likely to lead to any result; while the means alluded to by those who supported it appeared neither efficient nor just. The supporters of the motion, again, were far from being of one mind, as to the manner in which relief ought to be afforded: most of them required a repeal of the malt tax; others looked to an alteration in the currency; and Mr. O'Connell boldly proposed to attack the national debt; declaring that this wisest of nations had ruined the currency one-half, in order to pay with thirty shillings in the pound money borrowed at twenty shillings in the pound: when, however, he talked of the 'cant of national faith,' he called forth general indignation from the house; but more especially from sir Robert Peel, who declared that the honorable gentleman had decided the question respecting a repeal of the union by that preliminary declaration.

As to the motion itself, it implied nothing inconsistent with public faith; for the chancellor of the exchequer had asserted, incautiously and prematurely, that the national revenue was extremely prosperous; and that, accordingly, he held a certain sum applicable to the remission of taxes: he had also observed, that although his own inclination leaned toward a remission of the house-tax, yet he would not repeal that impost; but advised each party to consider the matter, and urge its own particular claims. On a division, the resolution was negatived by a majority of only four in a very full house; and this induced the noble mover to bring forward the subject again on the seventh of July, in the form of an address to the king: in the course of the discussion which ensued, it was declared, that unless the farmers were relieved, so as to enable them to support the poor, it would be altogether impossible for the magistrates, lay or clerical, to maintain peace in the rural districts. The motion was resisted on the ground of its being inconvenient, at so advanced a period, to disturb financial arrangements; but the chancellor of the exchequer held out a prospect of some slight alleviations, such as a removal of the tax from shepherds' dogs, as well as that from windows in farm-houses below a certain amount; and on a division, ministers had a majority of sixteen.

On the seventeenth of March, the question of the malt duty was brought directly before the house by a motion of Mr. Cobbett, one of the members for Oldham, 'that it should cease and determine from and after the fifth of October following.'

The grounds on which he justified this proposal were,—the great number of persons engaged in, or dependent on agriculture, who were affected by the tax; the expense of collection; the monopoly which it created; and, more especially, its pernicious influence on morals, by preventing the laborer from brewing his own beer, and thus driving him to the ale-house: the motion, however, was resisted, chiefly on the ground, that it would unsettle all the financial measures of the country, and diminish the revenue by £5,000,000, for which no substitute was or could be proposed.

But while the agriculturists were thus demanding relief, the corn-laws were not only insisted on, as an answer to all complaints, by those who maintained a different interest; but were themselves made a subject of formal attack. On the sixth of March, Mr. Hume opened a discussion, which lasted during that and the following day, by moving for ‘a committee of the whole house, to take into consideration the corn-laws (ninth of George IV. c. 60), in order to substitute, instead of the present graduated scale, a fixed and moderate duty on the import of foreign corn at all times into the united kingdom; also to grant an equivalent bounty on the export of corn, with the ultimate view of establishing a free trade in that article.’ Our limits preclude us from giving even an outline of the arguments used on both sides of this complicated question, on which several of the members most interested in agriculture voted with the mover, who traced all the existing distress to want of employment; this, again, he ascribed to obstacles which our corn-laws presented to the consumption of manufactures, by raising the price of production, and impeding their export to countries willing to take them in return for corn. Till about 1770, he said, England had been a country exporting grain: since then, the population had nearly doubled itself; and that increase had taken place chiefly in our manufacturing districts: now there was no mode of supporting this population, but by enabling us to supply with those manufactures every part of the world, which would take them for what they could give in return: agriculture could only support a limited number of laborers; but laborers would increase; and unless increasing manufactures were at hand to afford employment, they would be thrown back on the land, and eat up its whole produce, leaving no rent for the landlord: he took it for granted, that the produce of our soil had reached, or nearly reached, its utmost limit; but that our manufacturing population was increasing, might be seen by the increase of exports.

The defence of the corn-laws, he said, had always rested mainly on the necessity of protecting the agricultural interest ; but to that interest they were decidedly injurious : the object of the act of 1815, which might almost be said to have passed at the point of the bayonet, had been to keep the price of corn steady ; but had it effected its purpose ? No : look at the variations which had taken place since that period, running up and down within the limits of forty per cent., such as no provisions could guard against : so that, instead of being advantageous, this act had been really injurious to agriculturists : the landlord suffered under it, and the farmer was obliged to pay the amount even of a reduced rent out of his capital, until he at length became a bankrupt ; while the rest of the community were starved through the artificial want thus produced : so uncertain indeed and mischievous was this law found in its operation, that since 1815 twelve acts had been passed, violating its provisions in order to meet emergencies. Another important consideration was the effect which such laws had on our commercial relations with other countries : it had been clearly proved, that the virtual exclusion of our manufactures from American ports, which had caused so much suffering here, was owing to our refusal to admit American corn ; in revenge for which they had passed the tariff bill : Prussia, too, finding that we would not take her timber and corn, had shut us out from a great portion of Europe for the last ten years, and had now enlisted Germany in her views : none of our manufactures could penetrate there, except such as were contraband and smuggled : on every sound principle, therefore, the system should be changed for one that would give steady prices, and at the same time permit free commercial intercourse.

Mr. Hume's chief antagonist, on this occasion, was sir James Graham, who spoke at great length in favor of the existing system as necessary to prevent the destruction of an immense body of farmers and agricultural laborers, and with them the dissolution of many other important interests. As no country consumed so much corn as this, he observed, it became absolutely necessary for our safety that the supply should be so constant and abundant, as to permit no other country to injure and annoy us ; this point could only be secured by our home growth, protected by some system like the present ; which, by lowering the duty as the price rose, and vice versâ, gave at once protection to the grower, and relief to the consumer. Farther, it appeared to him, that we could not adopt

the views of Mr. Hume, without abandoning the principles which we followed in other cases; and Mr. Huskisson himself never contemplated this: he never made any attempt at 'free trade;' but only substituted *protecting* for *prohibitory* duties; for instance in the silk trade, which he altered, he left a minimum duty of twenty-five per cent. on some articles, whilst others were protected by duties of forty or fifty per cent. Now his express reason for this was, that our manufactures were burdened with taxes from which those of other countries were free: but in addition to general taxation there were special burthens pressing on agriculture, which required that land should obtain protection; and he enumerated the land-tax; the tithes; the malt duty; county rates, which placed the landlord in the position of a public prosecutor; and poor rates, which, together with the tithe, the legislature itself had declared equal to thirty-three per cent. of the rental. Tithes might be commuted and the poor laws amended; yet they would always leave a heavy charge on the land, however they were shaped.

But it was said that existing laws limited our exports, and consequently the employment of our increasing population: yet under these laws there had been a large increase of exports to all the chief corn-growing countries, the whole of which in the year 1828 amounted in official value to £27,472,000, and in 1832 to £35,216,000. In truth, he said, one of the very first effects of the present measure, if carried, would be to diminish the products of our manufactures, whilst it deprived numerous agricultural laborers of employment: thus our home market, the best source of manufacturing prosperity would decrease, and the manufacturing classes themselves become involved in a common ruin.

He did not undervalue foreign trade; but the foreigner should only be encouraged when native industry was dormant; and no importations should be allowed to supersede the produce of home labor. The question lay in a nut-shell: would they prefer Europe to Ireland and our North American colonies? The present average prices were said to be most injurious to the manufacturing interests: but if tried by facts, if estimated by the standard value of money, the average prices would be found not to have much varied within the last century. After showing from a variety of statements that the operation of free trade had in fact produced fluctuations and occasionally high prices, while the effect of an opposite system was steadiness and uniformity, the honorable baronet went on

to attack the principle of the proposed measure, as well as the time in which it was brought forward when our manufacturing classes were in full and prosperous employment. Mr. Hume, he also observed, had admitted, that his proposal would reduce rents thirty per cent.; and he spoke advisedly when he said, that two-thirds of the landed property of England would at once change hands: now, it could not be beneficial to the state that so great an act of injustice as this should take place: hard had been the fate of landholders under the operation of Peel's bill, which had already transferred no small share of the land into the hands of the fundholders, and reduced numerous families, who had pecuniary engagements on their estates, from opulence to beggary: but this would increase the evil to an overwhelming extent; for it would be equivalent to an agrarian law; it would effect a complete change in the existing state of society, by causing the destruction of its most important class; and his solemn opinion was, that the destruction of that class would be the destruction of the state itself. These statements of sir James Graham were answered in a very long and able speech by Mr. P. Thompson, vice-president of the board of trade, in which every argument since used by adversaries of the corn-laws may be discovered; but the motion was strongly opposed by Mr. Baring and Mr. Cutlar Ferguson.

Lord Althorp said, he should meet the motion with a direct negative, though his opinions were favorable to an alteration of the existing system. On a division, it was rejected by a majority of 312 against 155; though the subject was again incidentally discussed, for three mornings, when a petition was presented from Liverpool in favor of free trade, especially that of corn. On this occasion, sir Robert Peel, like his colleague sir James Graham, argued at great length on the gross injustice which would thence accrue to owners and cultivators of the soil, in consideration, not only of the peculiar burdens to which they were subject, but of the protection actually given to manufacturing interests; for the monopoly, with which the agriculturist had been taunted, consisted merely in that sort of protection which was afforded to almost every article of British manufacture, by the imposition of a duty on articles manufactured abroad. Without doubt (he observed) our manufacturers would be happy to witness a free trade in corn; but he doubted much if they would agree to the application of that principle to articles of manufacture. On the other hand, sir Henry Parnell declared,

that the pretext of farmers being interested in a continuance of the corn laws, was a gross delusion, practised on them by the landlords; for whose sole advantage the whole community was taxed: this doctrine, however, did not find many supporters; for it would be a still harder case to ruin the landlords, and with them so many other interests extending through all the ramifications of society, for a benefit to the country, which after all is very problematical, if the importance of the home market, the employment of the poor on lands which must then go out of cultivation, the lowering of wages to the *minimum* point, as well as the power of tyranny and exaction in the hands of speculators, be taken into account. In a very artificial state of society, like our own, even a high price of food would not be disadvantageous if means were taken to augment the power of consumption among the productive classes: but even this charge of evil need not be incurred by a paternal government, which would establish public granaries, and itself become an importer of corn.

Those concerned in the shipping interest also complained loudly of distress, which they considered as caused or aggravated by the admission of foreign ships into our ports, on the same terms as those on which our vessels were admitted into theirs; an admission, which the crown had the power of conceding, under the fourth of George IV. c. 77, commonly called 'the reciprocity of duties act.' Many petitions for its repeal were presented; and, on the fifth of June, Mr. G. F. Young moved for leave to bring in a bill for that purpose; but the motion was resisted by ministers, and thrown out by 117 votes against 52.

The financial affairs of the present year, notwithstanding the distress of the country, exhibited a very encouraging aspect; for the chancellor of the exchequer, after providing for the interest on £20,000,000 granted to West India proprietors, had a disposable surplus of £1,620,000; but from various alterations about to be made in the state of taxation, with respect to spirits and beer, the estimated surplus might be taken at £1,815,000: on the faith of this, the following reductions were made: in the house-tax, to be wholly abolished, £1,200,000; customs, £200,000; starch, £75,000; stone bottles and sweets, £6000; almanacks, £25,000; small assessed taxes, £75,000; whilst a surplus was still left, amounting to the sum of £234,000.

An important measure of finance was attempted this session,

in a plan for the reduction of the four per cent. annuities, created in 1826: all holders of that stock, who should not signify their dissent, were to have, for every £100, three and a half per cent. in a new stock, to be consolidated with the existing three and a half per cent. annuities, which were not liable to redemption before January, 1840. The dissentients amounted to a greater number than had been anticipated; and, in order to provide funds for paying them off, a resolution was passed, on the seventh of June, authorising the commissioners of the national debt to pay them out of the monies, stocks, or exchequer bills, which they held under 'the saving banks act;' while the dissented stock should, from the tenth of October following, be considered as converted into an equal amount of new three and a half per cents., which were to be vested in the commissioners, and placed in the Bank books to the account intitled 'funds for the banks of savings.' Two motions for the appointment of a select committee, by Mr. D. W. Harvey, and Mr. Strutt, to inquire into abuses of the pension list, were rejected this session by considerable majorities; as also was one by sir W. Ingleby, to repeal the duties on malt; compensation for their loss to be made by taxes on gambling houses and titles, with additional duties on gin and foreign wines. Mr. R. Grant brought in a bill for removing the civil disabilities of the Jews; which passed the commons, but was rejected by the lords; the Archbishop of Canterbury declaring, that it would be a degradation to a christian parliament, if Jews were allowed to legislate for a community of christians. The same fate attended a motion made by Mr. Tennyson for leave to introduce a bill for shortening the duration of parliaments. He had hoped that ministers themselves would have brought this question before the house, as the objection taken to it last session by the noble chancellor of the exchequer had reference only to the unfit time of its introduction. Lord Althorp, being thus appealed to, declared that his reason for having voted on former occasions for shortening the duration of parliaments was, that he then saw no prospect of carrying such a measure of reform as that which had since become the law of the land: a large proportion of the members of that house were no longer nominees of individuals; and it was not desirable now to have them dependent upon every temporary opinion of the people. Mr. O'Connell supported the motion on the principle that short accounts make long friends; but was answered with much ability by Mr. Stanley;

who took a complete view of the question. Some few other motions relating to the new state of parliamentary representation were similarly disposed of: but, on the fifteenth of April, those discontents and troubles which were now rife in lower Canada and threatened the very existence of our colonial government there, were brought under notice of the house of commons by Mr. Roebuck, who moved for a select committee to inquire into the political condition of the Canadas: this was met by an amendment from lord Stanley, which was carried; and which, though it appointed a select committee, confined their labors to an inquiry into grievances complained of in the lower province.

The distress felt at this time by all classes was dexterously made use of by the opponents of ministers to render their administration unpopular; so that they became exposed to great inconvenience from a statutory rule of the constitution, which requires, that all members of the house of commons, who accept certain offices under the crown, shall vacate their seats, and take the chance of a re-election: in more instances than one, the candidate thus stamped with the approbation of government, had not been re-elected; and even the attorney-general, having by promotion lost his seat for Dudley, was unable to appear in the house of commons. This was the first practical grievance experienced under the reform act, which had swept away all the close boroughs, and provided no means to compensate the loss: such a state of affairs, therefore, induced sir Robert Heron, without the concurrence or knowledge of ministers, to move for leave to bring in a bill, which might obviate the necessity of members vacating their seats under the circumstances above mentioned. He argued, that prior to the passing of the reform bill, it was necessary that the people should have it in their power to exercise an influence over the crown in the appointment of its ministers; but, since the system of representation had been so much improved, such a check was not only unnecessary, but embarrassing to the free exercise of the royal prerogative: the decisions of the people were frequently rash; and the object of his measure was to guard against the evils of any temporary excitement on the part of constituencies; for no man could now be certain of a return to parliament, unless the general policy of ministers happened to accord with the sentiments of the people. Mr. E. L. Bulwer, being dissatisfied with this reasoning, proposed a plan allowing ministers to hold seats in virtue of their official situations; when there

could be no local or temporary causes for not selecting the ablest men: the balance of interests in the cabinet could be at any time adjusted; and there would be a more complete exemption from the undue influence of particular constituencies: but Dr. Lushington and Mr. Ward opposed both propositions, as taking from the people one of the most valuable privileges given to them by the constitution, merely for the purpose of consulting the convenience and safety of the party now in power. Lord Althorp, after assuring the house that this subject had been introduced, without the sanction of government, did not hesitate to say that ministers had been put to great inconvenience; but, on the whole, he thought the time was not yet come, when a measure like that now proposed should be pressed on the house: both the motion and the amendment, therefore, were withdrawn. On the fifteenth of August, his majesty prorogued parliament; alluding in his speech with satisfaction to the numerous and important questions that had engaged its attention; more especially to the poor-laws, and the establishment of a central court for the trial of offences in the metropolis and its vicinity; while he directed attention to the important subjects of our jurisprudence and municipal corporations: he lamented the still unsettled state of Holland and Belgium; but ex-

⁶ The foreign policy of our government, in giving encouragement, or rather offering no opposition, to the dismemberment of the united kingdom of the Netherlands, has been made a subject of so much party vituperation, that a few words on it here may not seem out of place. Few greater faults were committed, at the end of the war, by the Castlereagh school of politicians, as regarded the commercial interests of Great Britain, than that of forming the junction alluded to. No country possesses greater advantages for manufactures, in its coal beds, its canals, its institutions, and the spirit of its people, than Belgium; whilst Holland is almost unrivalled in fine ports, rivers, ships, colonies, and commercial speculation: each state therefore was peculiarly adapted to the other; and during the union, their combined wealth and prosperity advanced with a rapid progress, diminishing our trade with many European states, and actually annihilating it in several parts of the East. The bigotry and obstinacy of the Dutch monarch, forming a strong contrast to the liberal and just views of his high-minded heir, at length produced a separation, which nothing is likely to heal. Revenge appears now to be the ruling principle among the Dutch, who aim at the ruin of Belgium by every means in their power; and although in this latter country there exists a large party anxious for the restoration of a union which was so productive of mutual advantages, yet the alliance formed by its present monarch with the French family is well calculated to secure the stability of his throne.

pressed a lively satisfaction at the termination of the civil war which had so long disgraced the kingdom of Portugal; rejoicing that the state of affairs in the peninsula had induced him to conclude with the king of the French, the queen-regent of Spain, and the regent of Portugal, that quadripartite treaty, which had materially contributed to produce so happy a result. Events, however, had since occurred in Spain, to disappoint, for a time, those hopes of tranquillity in that country, which the pacification of Portugal had inspired.

In fact Spain at this time was subject to the worst evils of civil war, and before the end of the year, Zumalacarregui, the Carlist general, and Mina, the commander of the queen's forces, had begun a system of extermination, accompanied with all those horrid cruelties which mark the Spanish character. In Portugal, whose territory was no longer polluted by the presence of Miguel, Don Pedro was declared regent; but he did not long enjoy the honor; for his health failed, and he resigned the cares of government on the eighteenth of September: in four days afterwards he expired, after recommending the Cortes to dispense with the law fixed by the charter for the majority of the queen: this was done; and on the first of December the young sovereign was married to the duke of Leuchtenberg, son of Eugene Beauharnois, and brother of Don Pedro's wife. The Cortes then passed a bill excluding for ever Don Miguel and his descendants from the succession; passed a decree for the sale of national domains, including that portion of church property which had been confiscated; and another for the substitution of a metallic for a paper currency: but their ingratitude and dishonesty were conspicuous toward their British auxiliaries, by whose aid principally the constitutional cause had been made triumphant. The political relations of Holland and Belgium still remained in a state of uncertainty on account of disputes respecting the cession of Luxemburg: Switzerland was disturbed through the invasion of Savoy by a band of expatriated Poles: Greece was harassed by the evils both of civil war and political intrigue: France was disturbed by frequent changes of ministry and the efforts of its unruly press: Germany also, particularly Bavaria, was disturbed by agitators; and Frankfort, after being subjected to an attack by armed bands of democratical students, was occupied by the troops of the Diet. It may be remarked, that in the beginning of this year, a treaty was concluded between the imperial and royal plunderers of Poland, the sovereigns of Russia,

Austria, and Prussia, mutually to deliver up, on demand, all persons accused of rebellion or treason, or engagement in any plot against the governments of these despotic states. In order to protect his subjects from the contagion of liberal principles, the Russian autocrat published a very severe ukase, to prevent any subject of the empire from residing in a foreign country without permission. In Turkey the ascendancy of Russia, ever on the watch for aggrandisement in this quarter, was increased by an alliance, offensive and defensive, concluded between those two powers; while the sanguinary contest in Syria between the tribes of that country and Mahomet Ali, gave the sultan an opportunity of coming to a rupture with that rebellious pasha, and endeavoring to restore the Egyptian pashalic under Ottoman subjection; but being refused military aid for this purpose by his imperial ally, he was obliged for the present to keep the peace. North America was occupied with the bank question, and the substitution of a metallic currency for paper, and with disputes between the president and senate; while the most shameful riots took place among the republicans of New York, and outrages were committed against the people of color, as atrocious as those with which the old Spanish royalists used to be upbraided. In Mexico, and others of the southern republics, the revolutions and slaughter which generally distinguish such forms of government naturally occurred.

Before the prorogation of parliament, the weakness of ministers, deserted by earl Grey, attacked on all sides by the tories, and abused even by their supporters, the radicals and Irish agitators, had become very apparent: between the end of the session and the month of October, Mr. O'Connell addressed a series of letters to lord Duncannon, in which every species of vituperation was heaped on the whig government; whilst in England, a journal, which had been long conducted with pre-eminent ability, beginning to change its line of politics, drew public attention strongly to a remarkable course of proceedings exhibited by lord Brougham, highly calculated to bring his colleagues into contempt. The death of earl Spencer, taking place on the tenth of November, hastened that dissolution of the cabinet, which could not have been long delayed: as this event removed lord Althorp to the house of peers, it was requisite to find a new chancellor of the exchequer, and a new leader of the house of commons; on Friday therefore, the fourteenth, lord Melbourne waited on the king, for the purpose of submitting to him some changes in official

appointments which earl Spencer's death had rendered necessary ; it had, however, long been known, that his majesty was veering round again to the old tory principles of his family ; that he entertained no affection toward his present cabinet ; and, yielding to the influence of those around him, he thought the time was now arrived when he might safely break it up ; accordingly, having expressed, as it was said, his opinion, that lord Brougham could no longer hold the great seal, as well as his dissatisfaction with the selection of those members of administration who were to frame the Irish church bill, he announced to lord Melbourne that he would not impose on him the task of completing official arrangements, but would make application to the duke of Wellington : on the following day, therefore, his grace waited on the king, and advised him to entrust the government to sir Robert Peel ; but, as that statesman, little expecting the honor about to be thrust upon him, had departed from England to visit Rome, the duke offered to carry on the public business provisionally till his return : this course was adopted ; and, as a temporary arrangement, his grace was appointed first lord of the treasury, and also sworn in as one of the principal secretaries of state. On the twenty-first, lord Lyndhurst took the oaths as chancellor ; but did not resign the office of lord chief baron : lord Brougham, therefore, who had started on a continental tour, wrote to him from France, proposing himself as a candidate for that office, which he offered to accept without any salary in addition to his retiring pension : to this lord Lyndhurst returned a courteous answer, signifying that no arrangements could be made till the return of sir Robert Peel ; and a few days afterwards, lord Brougham, hearing how his proposal had been commented on by his own party, withdrew the request.

On the ninth of December, the son of a cotton-spinner, whom the king had recalled from Rome, that he might make him prime minister of England,⁷ —a man belonging to the people by birth and to the aristocracy by education ; blessed with strong physical powers, commanding talents, and a princely fortune securing perfect independence—a man, under whom the great duke, the conqueror of Napoleon, was willing to serve,—arrived in London ; and on the same day, had an audience of his majesty, to receive the reins of government.

⁷ This was the just boast, and high tribute paid to the constitution of his country, by sir Robert himself, in a speech at Merchant Tailors' Hall, on the eleventh of May, 1835.

One of his first measures was a proposition to lord Stanley⁸ and sir James Graham, that they should become members of the new administration; but they both declined pledging themselves to the extent to which they might be considered bound by such a step; nor did a long time elapse, before it was seen, that although the dismissal of the Melbourne ministry had been received by the nation with undisturbed composure and humiliating tranquillity, yet the tories had been too precipitate in pushing their party back to office: however, it was certain that a new parliament must be assembled; and, until that time, they would at all events possess the sweets of patronage.

By the end of December every official arrangement was completed: lord Lyndhurst retained his place: the earl of Rosslyn became president of the council; lord Wharncliffe, privy seal; the duke of Wellington secretary for foreign affairs, Mr. Goulburn for the home department, and lord Aberdeen for the colonies: Mr. A. Baring was made president of the board of trade; sir G. Murray, master-general of the ordnance; sir E. Knatchbull, paymaster of the forces; earl de Grey, first lord of the admiralty; and lord Ellenborough, president of the board of control: lord Maryborough, the earls of Jersey and Roden, Mr. C. Wynne, and Mr. Herries came also into office: Mr. F. Pollock and Mr. Follett were made attorney and solicitor-general; the earl of Haddington went as viceroy to Ireland, with sir E. Sugden as the lord chancellor, and sir H. Hardinge as chief secretary; sir James Scarlett now obtained the reward of his adhesion to a tory administration, and of his strenuous efforts in the cause of bribery and corruption at Norwich; being appointed to succeed lord Lyndhurst as chief baron of the exchequer, with the title of lord Abinger.

Every man of any penetration saw that this ministry had too much of the old leaven to stand at present: sir Robert, however, who was determined to let the reform bill have fair play, did not despair; but immediately expounded the principles on which he designed to conduct the government, in a long address to his constituents at Tamworth. After observing, that he would not accept power on the condition of declaring himself an apostate from the principles on which he had heretofore acted; and declaring, at the same time, that neither before nor after the reform bill, had he been a defender of abuses, or an enemy to judicious reforms; he thus alluded to that

⁸ He had succeeded to this title by the death of his grandfather, the earl of Derby.

great alternative which had been applied to the constitution :— ‘ With respect to the reform bill itself, I will repeat now, the declaration which I made when I entered the house of commons as a member of the reform parliament,—that I consider that act as a final and irrevocable settlement of a great constitutional question ;—a settlement, which no friend to the peace and welfare of his country would attempt to disturb, either by direct or indirect means.’ Again, after wisely deprecating such a use of the reform bill, as would lead to a perpetual vortex of agitation, and to the overthrow of ancient rights and institutions, he thus proceeded :— ‘ If the spirit of the bill implies merely a careful review of institutions, civil and ecclesiastical, undertaken in a friendly temper ; combining, with the firm maintenance of established rights, a correction of proved abuses, and a redress of real grievances ;—in that case, I can, for myself and my colleagues, undertake to act in such a spirit, and with such intentions.’ Most persons gave due credit to sir Robert for patriotism and sincerity in these professions ; but he stood isolated in his own administration : few had that confidence, which he himself professed to have, in its other members ; and it was not destined long to last : on the thirtieth of December a proclamation was issued, dissolving the parliament, and convoking a new one, to meet on the nineteenth of February, 1835.

The early part of the new year was occupied by as determined a struggle between political parties as ever occurred in our history : the tories had placed their all on this cast of the die ; the Carlton club dispersed its agents far and wide throughout the country ; and every engine which aristocratic wealth and ecclesiastical influence could put in motion, was employed in gaining adherents to the conservative cause, and defeating the hopes of its adversaries. In the counties, the £50 clause operated to their advantage, and success generally attended their efforts ; but, in the towns, the opposite party had been more attentive to the registration of voters ; the middle classes were not willing, that the power with which they had so lately been invested, should be endangered by a tory administration ; the radicals made extraordinary efforts to assist the whigs, wherever they had no candidate of their own principles to support ; while Scotland and Ireland showed that they had not received the reform bill as a dead letter, but were determined to emancipate themselves, to the utmost extent possible, from a yoke under which they had so long groaned.

Before the meeting of parliament, there appeared in the London Gazette of the third of February, an article, announcing that the king had been pleased to direct letters patent to issue under the great seal, appointing the archbishop of Canterbury, the lord chancellor, the archbishop of York, the earl of Harrowby, the bishops of London, Lincoln, and Gloucester, the right honorable sir Robert Peel, H. Goulburn, C. W. W. Wynne, H. Hobhouse, and Sir Herbert Jenner, commissioners 'for considering the state of the several dioceses in England and Wales, with reference to the amount of their revenues, to the more equal distribution of episcopal duties, and to the prevention of the necessity of attaching, by commendam, to bishopricks, benefices with the cure of souls; for considering the state of the several cathedral and collegiate churches within the same, with a view to the suggestion of measures for rendering them more conducive to the efficacy of the established church; also for devising the best mode of providing for the cure of souls, with special reference to the residence of the clergy on their respective benefices.' Thus the administration of sir Robert Peel began to the satisfaction of all honest and reflecting persons, except those who consider the entire revenue of our church unconditionally as private property, and every existing division of it as inalienable from its possessor and his successors for ever: these, however, formed but a small party; for an opinion seemed generally to prevail, that the early death of Edward VI. had left the Reformation incomplete in England; and almost all who wished to see our religious establishments preserved, rejoiced in the prospect of its purification, while they placed great confidence in the character and good intentions of those who were appointed to superintend this grand design.

Before the end of January, it had been announced, by the publication of a correspondence between lord John Russell and Mr. Abercrombie, that the latter gentleman would be proposed by the opposition as speaker of the house of commons, the first day of session: on the other hand, it was known that ministers had in view the re-appointment of sir Charles Mannors Sutton; and as it was considered that this contest would afford a good indication of the strength of parties in the new house, it was looked forward to with anxious expectation; while strenuous efforts were made on both sides to bring up the whole force that each could command. The result was a larger assemblage of members on the nineteenth of February, the day for which parliament had been summoned, than had

ever before been collected. The re-appointment of sir Charles Manners Sutton was proposed by lord Francis Egerton, and seconded by sir Charles Burrell; after which, Mr. W. J. Denison proposed Mr. Abercrombie, and Mr. W. Ord seconded the motion. A debate of considerable length ensued, in which the principal speakers, beside the two candidates, were, for the motion of lord Francis Egerton, lord Stanley and sir Robert Peel; for that of Mr. Denison, lord John Russell: about six o'clock the house divided, when the numbers appeared to be 306 in favor of sir Charles Manners Sutton, and 316 for Mr. Abercrombie; a result, which was received with loud cheers by the majority: the honorable gentleman was then conducted to the chair; and next day, appearing at the bar of the house of lords, he received from the lord chancellor an assurance of his majesty's approval of the choice made by the commons. The late speaker was immediately called to the upper house by the title of viscount Canterbury, and as his pension had been fixed when he was about to retire from the chair, after the passing of the reform bill, parliament had no occasion to enter upon this question.

Friday, Saturday, and Monday were employed in the administration of the oaths to members; and on Tuesday, the twenty-fourth, his majesty came in state to the house of peers to open the new parliament, under new local circumstances; for the two houses having been last year burned down by the carelessness of attendants in heating the flues, temporary rooms had been fitted up for the accommodation of the British senate. In reference to this catastrophe, his majesty observed, in his opening speech, 'that it was his wish to adopt such plans for the permanent accommodation of lords and commons, as should be deemed, on their joint consideration, most fitting and convenient.' After alluding to the flourishing state of our trade and commerce, as well as of the public revenue, his majesty deeply lamented that the agricultural interest still labored under depression, and earnestly recommended the consideration of it to parliament with a view to relief: having adverted to treaties concluded with his allies the king of the French, and the queens of Spain and Portugal, as well as to various projected measures of domestic policy, such as the state of the Irish tithe question, the commutation of tithe in England and Wales, the improvement of civil jurisprudence and administration of justice in ecclesiastical causes, provision for the more effectual maintenance of ecclesiastical discipline, relief of dissenters in the marriage ceremony, together with the corporation and church

commissions; his majesty expressed his confidence in the willing co-operation of parliament, as well as in their caution and circumspection regarding the alteration of laws affecting very extensive and complicated interests, interwoven with ancient usages, and conformable to the habits and feelings of his people.

The address of the lords in answer to the speech was carried without a division, though not without a debate of considerable length, which turned chiefly on the late change of administration: the principal speakers were lord Melbourne, the duke of Wellington, lord Brougham, and the chancellor; when the duke defended his own conduct against the charge of usurping an unconstitutional power in the late change of administration, while the duke of Richmond and the earl of Ripon expressed an intention of supporting the new government, so far as they could applaud its measures, though they were unable to give it their confidence. The same evening, in the commons, an address was moved by lord Sandon, and seconded by Mr. Bramston; after which, lord Morpeth moved, 'that, in place of the two concluding paragraphs, should be substituted words, expressing a trust, that his majesty's councils would be directed in a spirit of well-considered and effective reform; that in the same liberal and comprehensive policy which had dictated the reform of our representation and the abolition of negro slavery, municipal corporations would be placed under vigilant popular control; all well-founded grievances of the protestant dissenters removed; and those abuses in our church, which impair its efficiency in England, and disturb the peace of society in Ireland, corrected; also representing to his majesty, that his faithful commons begged submissively to add, that they could not but lament, that the progress of these and other reforms should have been unnecessarily interrupted and endangered by the dissolution of the late parliament.' This amendment, being seconded by Mr. Bannerman, gave rise to a debate which lasted three nights: the chief speakers for the original address were, Messrs. Pemberton and Richards, sir Robert Peel, lord Stanley, Messrs. Robinson, Goulburn, and Praed, serjeant Goulburn, and sir James Graham; for the amendment, Messrs. Grote, Poulter, and Ward, Dr. Lushington, lord John Russell, Messrs. Harvey, Fox Maule, and Gisborne, lord Howick, Mr. T. Duncombe, and Mr. O'Connell. On a division, the opposition had a majority of seven in an assembly of 625 members; when sir Robert Peel intimated that it was possible he might take the sense of the house again on the question of bringing

up the report; but, next evening, he stated, that after having made due inquiries, he felt convinced he could not succeed in that measure: it was understood, indeed that he would not have been supported in it by lord Stanley; who, in the course of debate, declared that he would go the whole length of the amendment on the subject of corporation reform: his lordship also said, that the omission of any particular notice of that subject, in the speech from the throne, as well as in the exposition of ministerial intentions, which sir Robert had given to the house, induced him to regard the government with a more jealous eye than he should otherwise have been inclined to view it. Lord Howick did not consider that the necessary effect of carrying the amendment would be to remove the present administration; for he should scarcely give the vote he intended to give, if it were likely to have that result; but though he did not desire the immediate retirement of sir Robert Peel and his colleagues, he should regard it as a great calamity if the present government continued without any change. His majesty, in answer to the amended address, replied, with that promptness and fearlessness innate in his character—‘I learn with regret that you do not concur with me in the policy of the appeal which I recently made to the sense of my people. I never have exercised, and never will exercise, any of the prerogatives which I hold, except for the single purpose of promoting the great end for which they are intrusted to me—the public good.’

On the twenty-eighth, when the order of the day was read for the house going into a committee of supply, the premier stated, in answer to questions put by lord John Russell, that he had not felt it his duty, in consequence of the vote on the address, to tender his resignation; that, with respect to the Irish church, he retained his opinion that ecclesiastical property ought not to be diverted from ecclesiastical purposes, although any measures, not inconsistent with this principle, should have his best consideration; that he had no motive or intention to obstruct corporation reform; and, finally, that in regard to a rumor which had been spread abroad about another dissolution, and an alleged intention of government, in case the mutiny bill should not pass, to keep up a standing army in defiance of parliament,—the first he never sanctioned, directly or indirectly; and about the second he never heard a whisper, until it fell from lord John’s own lips.

The next evening was occupied by discussions respecting the state of Ireland, and bribery at elections; but the sitting on

Wednesday produced one of much greater importance to the stability of the administration: this arose from a question asked by Mr. Finn,—whether it was true that 182 addresses from Orange societies had been presented to the king on the twenty-sixth of February, and answers returned to the parties, stating that the addresses had been most graciously received? The question seemed to take ministers by surprise; and the only defence offered to the charge of returning such answers to associations alleged to be illegal, was, that the illegality of Orange lodges had never been judicially declared, and that the addresses had been received and answered merely according to the usual form. On the following Friday, Mr. Sheil moved for copies of the addresses alluded to; also for a copy of a letter written by lord Manners, when chancellor of Ireland, relative to the illegality of Orange societies, and for the opinions of the Irish attorney and solicitor-general on the same point: the latter part of this motion was resisted by ministers, and eventually withdrawn; but the production of the addresses and answers was agreed to.

The first proposal which ministers found themselves compelled to resist, proceeded from one of their own supporters: on Tuesday the tenth, in a very full house, the marquis of Chandos, pursuant to notice, proposed his resolution for the repeal of the malt tax as a source of relief to the agricultural interest: the debate that followed, in which the speech of sir Robert Peel was worthy of all admiration, lasted till near one o'clock in the morning; and when the house divided, numbers were, for the resolution 192, against it 350. On this occasion, most of the adherents of the late ministry voted in the majority; Mr. Charles Wood expressing satisfaction in giving to the present government that support which he and his friends had received, in similar circumstances, from sir Robert Peel: so powerful, indeed, and convincing were the premier's arguments on this occasion, that several members voted with him, who had either pledged themselves at their election to take a different side, or had, at least, induced their constituents to believe they would: this led Mr. Spring Rice to remark, very justly, that pledges were awful things; even when honestly meant, they might sometimes be given in ignorance, and could not be redeemed without a gross violation of duties which honorable members owed to the community at large.

Other important subjects, too numerous to notice, were brought under discussion; among which, was one introduced by the attorney-general for the improvement of our ecclesias

tical courts ; and an interesting debate took place on the choice of lord Londonderry as ambassador to the court of Russia : this appointment had been denounced even by public journals devoted to the service of ministers ; and it was now represented as such an outrageous attack on continental freedom, such a furtherance of the designs of despotism and tyranny, such a confirmation of the foreign policy of the duke of Wellington and lord Aberdeen, that Mr. Sheil introduced the subject by moving an address to his majesty for a copy of the appointment. Lord Stanley having strongly declared against ministers on the question, there was little doubt of their being left in a minority if they pressed the matter to a division : this course however they prudently declined ; and sir Robert Peel stated, that, in fact, no formal appointment had been made ; and he certainly did not mean to recommend that the design itself should be persisted in : but lord Londonderry soon relieved ministers from their embarrassment, by voluntarily relinquishing the office ; though he vindicated his own character and conduct with great spirit, and was supported by his friend the duke of Wellington.

On Tuesday, the seventeenth, the premier introduced his measure for the relief of persons dissenting from the established church, in regard to the celebration of marriage ; and obtained leave, with much satisfaction expressed on all sides of the house, to bring in a bill for carrying it into effect. On Thursday, the nineteenth, the chancellor laid on the table of the house of lords the first report of the commissioners appointed to inquire into the state of the established church ; and on the Friday following, sir H. Hardinge, in the commons, brought forward, in a committee of the whole house, the ministerial plan for settling the Irish tithe question. It involved the following particulars :—that, in future, Irish tithes be recoverable only from the chief landlord, or person having the first estate of inheritance in the land ; that the owner be intitled to demand only seventy-five per cent. on the amount to which he at present has a right ; that the tithe be redeemable by the landlord at twenty years' purchase, calculated on the diminished rate ; that the proceeds thus arising be invested in land or otherwise, for the benefit of the tithe-owners ; present incumbents to be indemnified against any loss accruing in the amount of their incomes below the seventy-five per cent., but their successors to receive only the income, whatever it may be, which the investment might produce ; that all litigation for the recovery of tithes due be carried on through the incor-

porated commissioners of the ecclesiastical fund; that the repayment of sums granted under the million act be not called for; but that the residue of that sum be farther distributed among tithe-owners, in lieu of tithes due to them for the year 1834, which they may not have been able to collect.

A long debate followed the proposal of these resolutions. Lord John Russell contended that, in principle, they were perfectly identical with the bill introduced last session by the late ministers, and which had been thrown out in the house of lords by the present government and their friends: his lordship said, that of course he had no opposition to offer against the measure. Mr. O'Connell, on the contrary, endeavored to show that the two plans were intirely dissimilar: in point of fact, the main distinctions between them appeared to be, that the bill of last session made to landlords a present of two-fifths of the tithes, or of £40 in every £100; securing to the clergyman seventy-seven and a half per cent. of his legal income, and bringing an annual charge, equal to seventeen and a half per cent. of the whole tithes, on the consolidated fund; while it was now proposed to give the landlords only one-fourth of the tithes; to secure to the clergyman only seventy-five per cent. of his legal income; and to devolve no charge on the consolidated fund: in the course of the debate, such strong objections were taken to the clauses dispensing with the repayment of the sums distributed, and to be distributed, under the million act, that ministers consented to withdraw them. On the twenty-third, the report of the committee was brought up, and the bill, embodying those resolutions which had been agreed to, was read a first time; when sir R. Peel intimated, that he should move for the re-insertion of the rejected clauses relating to the million act at a subsequent stage of the measure: in the course of a conversation which arose out of this subject, Mr. Barron denounced what he described as inconsistency and abandonment of principle in sir R. Peel and his colleagues, whom he charged with being merely actuated by a base desire of office: for these expressions, the honorable member was directed by the speaker to apologise to the house; which he accordingly did. Mr. Finn then brought forward his motion for a select committee to inquire into the nature, extent, and tendency of Orange lodges; which was agreed to without a division.

On Tuesday the twenty-fourth, in the house of lords, a select committee was appointed on the motion of the duke of Richmond, to consider the subject of prison discipline in Eng-

land and Wales; and the same evening, in the commons, the house having resolved itself into a committee, sir R. Peel brought forward his plan for effecting a commutation of tithes in England, by a voluntary agreement between the owner and payer of tithe in each parish; the basis of the plan being the substitution of a corn-rent in lieu of tithe, subject to revision at the option of either party after every period of seven years: a short debate ensued, and a resolution, embodying the leading principle of the plan, was unanimously agreed to. On the twenty-sixth, Mr. Tooke moved that an address should be presented to the crown, for the grant of a charter to the London university; and, after a debate of some length, the motion was carried, against ministers, by a majority of 246 to 110. His majesty's answer, which was returned in a few days, stated that the address had been laid before the privy council; and that he would, without delay, call for a report of its proceedings, in order that he might be enabled to judge of the best means of carrying into effect the wishes of his faithful commons.

On the twenty-seventh, the army and ordnance estimates were carried by large majorities, though not without a fierce struggle with Mr. Hume and his partisans; and on Monday the thirtieth, after the house had been called over, lord John Russell brought forward his motion on the Irish church, in the form of a resolution,—‘for a committee of the whole house, to consider respecting the temporalities of the church of Ireland.’ This motion, which was, as it were, a gauntlet thrown down to ministers, was met by sir Edward Knatchbull with a direct negative; and a debate ensued, which was continued by adjournments over the three following nights: the speakers were numerous on both sides; and after lord John Russell had briefly replied, the house divided about three o'clock on the morning of Friday, April the fourth; when the numbers were found to be, for the motion 322, against it 289. On the evening of the same day the house went into committee on the motion of lord John, who moved, ‘that it is the opinion of this committee, that any surplus which may remain, after fully providing for the spiritual instruction of members of the established church in Ireland, ought to be applied to the general education of all classes of christians.’ When the debate had continued some time, Mr. Peter Borthwick moved an adjournment; but his motion was negatived; and soon afterwards the house adjourned to Monday, the sixth: on that day the debate was resumed, and the committee at length

divided ; when the resolution was carried by a majority of 262 against 237 ; and the house then went into committee on the navy estimates. On Tuesday, the report of the committee on the Irish church was brought up, when lord John Russell rose, and moved, 'that it is the opinion of this house, that no measure on the subject of tithes in Ireland can lead to a satisfactory and final adjustment, which does not embody the principle contained in the foregoing resolution.' Another long debate followed, in which it was declared, by Mr. Gisborne, that the protestant church in Ireland, not being in harmony with the feelings of the great majority of its population, was the foundation of all the disturbance, crime, and misery, which prevailed there ; and this resolution was a last, and he hoped not a vain or desperate attempt, to save that church by rendering it, if not palatable, at least tolerable : at length the house divided ; when the numbers appeared, for the motion 285, against it 258.

On Wednesday, the eighth of April, the duke of Wellington in the lords, and sir R. Peel in the commons, declared that their administration was at an end : both houses met subsequently on various days, but without transacting any business of importance ; until lord Melbourne announced in the lords, on the eighteenth, that he had been appointed first lord of the treasury, and that the new administration was formed : to a question asked by lord Alvanley, he replied, that he did not know whether he should have the assistance of Mr. O'Connell or not ; but that he had taken no means to secure it, and had entered into no terms whatever with that honorable and learned gentleman : his lordship added, that to Mr. O'Connell's opinions, in favor of a repeal of the union and the abolition of the house of peers, he was intirely opposed : the house then adjourned to the thirtieth of April ; but with an understanding, that no public business would be undertaken till the twelfth of May. The same evening, in the commons, Mr. F. Baring moved for new writs on account of vacancies occasioned by the appointment of seventeen members to offices under the crown ; and the commons also adjourned to the twelfth of May.

The new cabinet was composed as follows :—viscount Melbourne, first lord of the treasury ; lord Palmerston, lord John Russell, and Mr. C. Grant, secretaries respectively for the foreign, home, and colonial departments ; lord Lansdowne, president of the council ; lord Duncannon, privy seal, and chief commissioner of woods and forests ; lord Auckland, first

lord of the admiralty; sir J. C. Hobhouse and Mr. Poulett Thompson, presidents of the boards of control and of trade; lord Howick, secretary at war; lord Holland, chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster; and Mr. Spring Rice, chancellor of the exchequer; the great seal remained some time in commission, for the king had a great dread of lord Brougham; but it was finally intrusted to sir C. Pepys, master of the rolls, who became chancellor, with the title of lord Cottenham: sir John Campbell and Mr. R. M. Rolfe were made attorney and solicitor-general; and Mr. Cutlar Ferguson, judge advocate: the earl of Mulgrave went as lord-lieutenant to advance the popularity of ministers and the catholic interests in Ireland, where lord Plunkett was made chancellor, and lord Morpeth, chief secretary, with Mr. serjeant Perrin and Mr. O'Loughlin as attorney and solicitor-general; both of them patronised by O'Connell, but neither of them distinguished by that turbulence and rabid abuse which characterised their patron: the lord advocate of Scotland was Mr. J. A. Murray. Among other appointments, were those of sir Henry Parnell, as paymaster of the forces, and treasurer of the navy; the marquis of Conyngham, postmaster-general; and marquis Wellesley, lord chamberlain.

Thus the short-lived ministry of sir Robert Peel passed away, not because the premier himself was generally believed dishonest or insincere; but because he was considered as a tool in the hands of men, who flattered only to betray: it was succeeded by an administration, the leading members of which, being taught by experience, were not so liable as before to be caught by the wiles and snares of their opponents: relying on that portion of the community which now possessed the principal share of political power, they determined to pursue a steady course of reform, presenting a bolder front to their adversaries; and the power of public opinion long supported them: dangers however of a complicated kind threatened their stability, which required all their prudence and sagacity to avert: they knew that if they should succeed in weathering the storm, they would probably be able to restore our constitution to a sound state, repairing what was decayed in the fabric, without disturbing its foundation: and if they fell, they would have the consolation to reflect, that few administrations could compete with them in the magnitude and importance of those national questions which they had already set at rest: to effect their ulterior designs, it was necessary to establish their power on a firm and lasting basis; and this was done so

effectually, in accordance with a wish expressed by his majesty himself, that the present administration outlived its royal master.

The retreat of sir Robert Peel having thus induced the king to recall lord Melbourne to his councils, he seems to have attached himself, with cordiality and sincerity, to a reforming administration. The new writs in consequence of this change of ministers were moved for, in the commons, on the eighteenth of April, without remark. In the upper house, lord Melbourne, after adverting to the great difficulties which he had experienced in forming his administration, declared his intention of conducting it on principles similar to those adopted in his former government; which, he said, had been to a great extent recognised, confirmed, and strengthened by that which succeeded it. These were principles of safe, prudent, and efficient reform, whose tendency was not to subvert or endanger, but to improve, strengthen, and establish our national institutions. In answer to some questions relating to the aid, or at least the forbearance of Mr. O'Connell, which he seemed to have obtained for the new administration, his lordship again stated, that he had taken no steps to secure it, nor had he entered into any terms with that individual: with regard to similar interrogatories on the subject of tithes, he did not hesitate to declare, that he considered himself pledged to act on the resolution of the other house.

On the twentieth both houses adjourned till the twelfth of May; and when the new ministers who belonged to the lower house had to be re-elected, several lost their seats: neither lord John Russell nor lord Palmerston could procure one, until parliament assembled; when colonel Fox, the sitting member for Stroud, made room for the former, and the latter moved into the vacated place of Mr. Kennedy, at Tiverton; while the counties of Stafford and Inverness, which at the last general election returned Mr. Littleton and Mr. C. Grant as representatives, now placed conservatives in the room of those gentlemen, who had been called to the upper house by the titles of lords Hatherton and Glenelg.

When ministers explained what they intended to do, it was found that the only measures to be brought forward, were a bill for the reform of municipal corporations; and one regarding tithes in Ireland, founded on the late resolutions of the commons: nothing was to be done in relation to the dissenters, or ecclesiastical reform, commutation of tithes, and church-rates in England; for lord John Russell declared, that

if he had learned anything by experience in the last three years, during which he had been a member of government, it was, that ministers frequently fell into difficulties, by undertaking too many concerns; in which, at the end of the session, they could not proceed from want of time for due consideration. Opposition members admitted that it was wiser to proceed with caution than to advance with measures hastily, and as hastily to abandon them: but they complained, that delay in those above mentioned had formed a subject of complaint in the amendment to the late address; and had assisted in turning out a ministry which had been prepared to bring them forward.

Great changes in the mode of electing municipal authorities, and in the general government of boroughs, had become inevitable from the passing of the reform bill. Even the affairs of parliament did not exhibit such abuses as now came under consideration; for the powers of self-elected municipal councils had been subjected to no popular control; and their secret proceedings being unchecked, pillage by wholesale appeared in the list of vices; many boroughs having been partially, and others utterly, despoiled of their revenues, by those appointed to be their guardians.

In addition to the interest which a reform ministry had in effecting such changes, for securing the influence of their own political party, it was difficult to exclude from the election of the new town-councils, such inhabitants of boroughs, as were trusted with the election of members of the legislature. The boroughs of Scotland had already undergone a fundamental change; the election of magistrates and town-councillors having been vested in the ten-pound householders: and now, in accordance with the recommendation of a committee of the house of commons in 1833, and a commission which had been appointed to inquire into the state of corporations in England and Wales, these also were doomed to undergo a similar system of purification; shocking to those who had grown old in party spirit and involuntary prejudices; who looked with alarm at the doctrines and privileges of new classes; and who, though they might have been naturally benevolent, had no charity for changes of mind and vicissitudes of opinion: such persons had a fair show of reason on their side, when they contended against involving all boroughs, however well governed and prosperous, in one sweeping change, for the faults committed by a few; and they eventually had some degree of triumph,

when it was discovered, that democratic turbulence often succeeded to tory corruption; while party spirit, excluding its political opponents from office, remained as strong as ever.

Proceeding on the recommendation by the committee, lord John Russell, on the fifth of June, detailed the plan of municipal government intended to provide for 183 corporations, including a population of at least two millions: after detailing the unfitness of these bodies to represent the property of the towns in which they were situated, and displaying the abuses by which they had exasperated the general feeling against them—among others a misapplication of charity trusts for the sole advantage of their own connexions; money lavishly spent in sumptuous feasts; shameful encouragement of bribery in the price demanded for votes at elections—the noble mover proposed his scheme of reformation, relating to charters; qualification of electors; aldermen, town-councillors, and other officers; pecuniary rights and modes of admission into corporations; administration of justice; and election of borough magistrates.

Sir Robert Peel declared that, reserving all consideration of details, he would throw no impediment in the way of a measure which the circumstances of many towns increasing rapidly in population and wealth, and of others declining in both, as well as the general interests of the country seemed to demand; and which parliament had a right to institute: he objected however to many recommendations of the commissioners; who, he thought, had not sufficiently guarded against the transfer of abuses from one set of men to another.

On the fifteenth of June the bill was read a second time, without opposition; each party conceding the principle that municipal government should be subjected to some degree of popular control; all discussion on the fitness or unfitness of its particular arrangements being reserved for the committee; which began its labors on the twenty-second of June and finished them on the seventeenth of July. The first disputed point arose respecting the boundaries of those boroughs whose limits had not been defined by the act passed for such purpose in reference to the reform bill; ministers wishing to give that power to the king and privy council, which sir Robert Peel, lord Dudley Stuart, sir James Graham, Mr. Goulburn, and others, considered as belonging rather to the legislature. An amendment on this question was pressed by opposition, but lost against a majority of 87 votes.

A more important discussion took place on the clause affecting the rights of existing freemen, and the future modes of acquiring freedom in corporations. Against the ministerial design, allowing only occupancy and payment of rates to obtain such privileges after the passing of this bill, sir Wm. Follett argued at great length, and with much acuteness; moving an amendment, to the effect of preserving their rights to existing freemen, without interfering with municipal government. Ministers however vehemently opposed it, and carried the original clause by a majority of 44: but the question was again moved by Mr. Praed in a different shape; the tories rallied all their forces in favor of one of their grand principles; and it was now lost only against a majority of 28. Equally unsuccessful was an amendment, moved by Mr. Ponsonby, for protecting inchoate rights of freemen to vote in elections, on account of birth or apprenticeship: also one by sir R. Peel relating to the pecuniary qualifications of common-councillors; and another by lord Stanley, on the clause which made the periods of their election annual, and which his lordship wished to be extended to two years, by which means more steadiness of counsel and greater freedom from caprice would be ensured. A division also took place on the clause which declared the town-clerk removable at pleasure, but which was retained by a majority of 60; and sir James Graham was equally unsuccessful in opposing that which vested in the council a power of granting or refusing all licenses within their borough, and which he considered as inconsistent with a declared object of the promoters of the bill, that of keeping distinct the judicial and magisterial functions. Every effort made to alter the bill in committee having thus failed, it was read a third time on the twentieth of July; the only hope of amelioration resting on the house of lords.

Here it encountered a powerful opposition, especially from the duke of Wellington's personal character and weight of argument; and from the legal knowledge and eloquence of lord Lyndhurst. At its second reading many petitions from different corporations were presented, complaining of gross and grievous misrepresentations made by the commissioners, and praying to be heard by counsel against the bill. This being granted, the hearing of counsel began on the thirtieth of July, and was continued on the two following days; the gentlemen who appeared for the corporate boroughs being sir Charles Wetherell and Mr. Knight. When their argu-

ment was concluded, lord Melbourne declared that he would oppose any motion for allowing evidence to be adduced in defence of any of the corporations; but, when he moved, on the third of August, that the house should go into committee on the bill, a motion made by the earl of Caernarvon to receive such evidence, was carried against him, after a long debate, by a majority of 70 votes. The house was occupied from the fifth to the eighth of August in hearing evidence, which charged the commissioners with taking their information principally from partisans of their own opinions, from discontented persons easily to be found in all places, or from others on whose word no reliance could be placed; and when this was finished, the house went into committee on the twelfth. The duke of Newcastle had proposed a rejection of the whole measure, but did not press his motion to a division, having ascertained that the conservative peers had resolved to pass the bill; which they thought might be serviceable if stripped of those provisions which appeared to them most operative for evil. Accordingly many amendments were moved and supported, principally by lord Lyndhurst, relating to the rights of borough property, and privileges vested in freemen and their descendants—to the preservation of their elective franchise as secured by the reform bill—to the qualification of town-councillors—to a fixed proportion of councillors holding office for life; in all of which ministers were defeated by large majorities; whilst others relating to justices of the peace, to the division of boroughs into wards with an appointed number of councillors to each, to the ecclesiastical patronage of corporations, and to the retention of the power of determining burghal boundaries in the hands of parliament instead of the king in council, were carried without much discussion or any division: and though one, relating to the town-clerks holding office during good behavior, was opposed, it also was carried by a majority of 104 to 36.

The amended bill was passed by the lords on the twenty-eighth of August, 'mutilated and spoiled,' if the assertions of ministers were to be believed; and its amendments were brought before the commons on the thirty-first by lord John Russell, who complained much of the mode of proceedings adopted by the upper house, which had gone into inquiries and listened to speeches directed merely to abuse the house of commons, and disparage the new electoral body. The question however was, whether the bill, even as thus altered,

might not be moulded into an efficient instrument of good municipal government. Though he objected strongly to the appointment of town-clerks for life, and still more to that of aldermen; as well as to the retention of borough magistrates, who were so now by virtue of their offices: yet he did not intend altogether to dissent from the amendment regarding the division of towns, or the qualification of property, or the reservation to existing freemen of their parliamentary franchise and their share in common lands; though he objected to limit the exercise of ecclesiastical patronage to those members of the councils who might belong to the church of England.

Ministers were severely blamed by the radical party for lowering the dignity of the house, and disappointing the wishes of the nation, by conceding too much to the peers; who, it was said, ought to take warning from the signs of the times. 'Why,' observed Mr. Roebuck, one of the members for Bath, 'should the real representatives of the people bear the insults of so weak a body, when they have the power to crush it? Having reformed themselves, was there no other body that required the excision of the knife? He was an advocate to the utmost for *democracy*; and the sooner they brought this matter to an understanding the better:' luckily, however, the sentiments of this raving democrat found but few admirers either in the house or among the people, who retain too great a love for their ancient nobility and institutions, to wish that they should be trod under foot by a *democracy*, that worst of all *tyrannies*. The amended bill was discussed with great candor and temper, chiefly through the good sense, as well as good intentions, of lord John Russell and sir Robert Peel: being returned to the lords, the amendments of the commons were taken into consideration on the fourth of September, and were agreed to with a few exceptions; though the peers still retained their original amendments, providing that justices should be named directly by the crown; and that a division into wards should begin with boroughs containing 6000, instead of 9000 inhabitants. The commons agreed to the bill as sent back to them, on the seventh of September, when it was passed as it now stands; an effective instrument for sweeping out one chamber in the den of corruption: and though the whigs, by following the exclusive system of the tories, have occasioned a revulsion of feeling, and thrown back many boroughs into the hands of their political antagonists, yet it must be confessed, that the main sources of corruption are destroyed.

While the municipal bill was occupying attention in the upper house, the commons were considering the other important measure to which ministers had limited themselves for this session; a bill for regulating the Irish church. This, introduced by lord Morpeth, on the twenty-sixth of June, did not differ much from what had been proposed by sir Robert Peel's government; it being intended to convert the existing composition for tithes into a rent-charge equal to seven-tenths of the amount of composition; the cost of collection being thrown upon the tithe owners, relieved as they would be from all risk and trouble. A mode also was proposed for creating a surplus by the suppression of benefices; and a clause was introduced, providing that the consolidated fund should immediately begin to make an annual payment of £30,000 for the purposes of general education in Ireland, on the faith of this anticipated surplus. The bill was read a second time without discussion, and passed the commons; but we need not enter at any length into its details, because it was ultimately abandoned by ministers, when the lords, who had agreed to its clauses for the reduction and collection of tithes, carried a motion for striking out those for the suppression of benefices and the appropriation of their funds. One consequence of this abandonment was a bill brought in by the chancellor of the exchequer, on the twenty-ninth of August, empowering government to suspend, under certain conditions, its claims for repayment of an instalment advanced to the Irish clergy, due on the fifth of April, 1836: as this bill was calculated to remedy great hardship, it passed both houses without opposition. But it was not only with the Irish church that ministers were involved; owing to the position in which they stood with dissenters, who oppose the application of public money to the payment of any party merely because its creed is that of the majority, an annual grant of £10,000 to the established church of Scotland, which had been recommended by sir R. Peel, was now coldly received; being referred to a commission of inquiry, who might report 'how far the building and endowing places of worship in Scotland is required for the moral and religious instruction of its lower orders:' but as soon as the names of the commissioners were known, the general assembly in Scotland expressed much dissatisfaction, and transmitted a strong remonstrance to government: this, however, produced no change in the commission, though it drew another strong protest from the assembly's committee.

Another subject which engaged parliamentary attention was

the establishment of Orange lodges, more especially those in the army, wherein the duke of Cumberland and colonel Fairman, did not figure very advantageously: these practices drew down upon them the merited indignation of Mr. Hume; and a select committee was appointed to inquire into their extent and tendency. As usually happens after a general election, the house had to deal with many petitions, the result of which did not materially affect the comparative strength of parties; though a flagrant instance of bribery at Ipswich, which unseated the sitting members, showed a determination in the tories, to adopt any expedients for the restoration of their lost power. Proceedings also were taken against witnesses for evading service of summons, and against others for refusing to answer. Mr. Grote made his annual motion in favor of 'vote by ballot;' and ministers were strongly urged to protect themselves and the liberal party by this measure against the powerful interests arrayed against them: but there were found 317 in a house of 461, unwilling to sanction a measure so adverse to the feelings of Englishmen, and to the spirit of our constitution. At the opening of the session numerous notices had been given for committees, or for leave to bring in bills, bearing more or less on the constitution of parliament; for preventing bribery and corruption; for reducing expenses at elections; for protecting electors against that system of intimidation which was now carried to a disgraceful height; and for indemnifying witnesses giving evidence in cases of bribery. In some instances, committees were granted; but the only legislative measure carried through, was a bill altering the reform act, so far as to allow two days for taking votes at a contested election, and limiting the poll to one day, unless it should be necessary to adjourn it in case of a riot. The polling places were to be arranged so that not more than 300 electors should poll at one booth; which number might be reduced to 100, on the application of a candidate or elector; such party paying all additional expenses. During the session a motion, introduced by Mr. G. Berkeley, passed the lower house to admit a certain number of ladies into the gallery during debates; but it was very ungallantly opposed by lord John Russell, and lost by a majority of thirty, when the committee came to make their report, on the fourth of August.

Agricultural distress was extensively prevalent this year, while the average price of wheat was not more than forty shillings a quarter. Cheap corn, it was found, did not intro-

duce plenty and enjoyment into the rural cottages, but was rather accompanied by excessive destitution; for an alleviation of which the poor, in many localities, were indebted to the removal of multitudes into the manufacturing districts. Hence it was argued that if cheap corn, when produced by the exertions of our own population, fails to increase the comforts of the lower orders, importation of foreign corn must augment the evil tenfold by transferring the demand for British labor to Poland, and making Russian serfs the means of cheap food in England. Such circumstances led the marquis of Chandos to bring this subject before the house, in a motion to reduce the pressure of local burthens under which the agricultural interest was laboring; but, when pressed to a division, it was lost by a majority of 211 to 150. In the course of this discussion, some members repeated the opinion so often expressed by one party in the house, that all the evil had arisen from the resumption of cash payments, and could only be cured by some alteration of our currency. On the first of June this opinion was embodied in a motion by Mr. Cayley, one of the Yorkshire members, for the appointment of a select committee of inquiry, which was rejected by a large majority; as also was that made by sir Samuel Whalley, to repeal the window-tax, one of the most intolerable burthens under which the poorer classes labored. The whole system of taxation was brought under notice on the twelfth of June by Mr. Robinson, member for Worcester; but the motion founded on it was rejected by 105 against 42 votes; the mover complaining, that, while party and personal questions absorbed the attention of the house, and filled its benches, any motion relating solely to the general benefit of the people, was met by an appearance of indifference or apathy, well fitted to discourage any man from undertaking the task. An alteration was made in the duties on tea; government resolving to fix the duty on all teas at 2s. 1d. per pound; but postponing its operation till July, 1836, that it might not affect the teas on hand, or orders sent out to China. The exchequer had likewise to provide, during the present session, for payment of that large sum voted to West Indian planters, as a compensation for the losses to which the abolition of slavery would expose them: but as this payment was, in some measure, contingent on the fulfilment of certain conditions of the emancipation act, Mr. Fowell Buxton on the nineteenth, moved for a committee of inquiry, but was resisted on the part of government by sir George Grey, and withdrew his motion. A motion also to repeal stamp duties

upon newspapers was resisted on the ground of financial difficulties, though the propriety of such a measure, under different circumstances was readily conceded.

It was not till the fourteenth of August that the chancellor of the exchequer was enabled to bring out his budget. After alluding to the reductions already made in taxation and expenditure, he mentioned several temporary charges in the present year which would swell the estimates; instancing those on account of fires which had destroyed our houses of parliament, and injured the Dublin docks; compensation given to one class of Danish claimants; and £10,000 voted to Polish refugees; also various sums for the revising barristers, for education in our West Indian colonies, for the relief of sufferers by the dreadful hurricane at Dominica, and for antiquities purchased by the British Museum. The total of these sums was £436,000; which might be looked on as an extraordinary charge; interfering, however, with any plan for reduction of taxation which might otherwise have been contemplated.

In stating his estimate for the ensuing year, ending in July 1836, he calculated our national income at £45,550,000, and our expenditure at £44,715,000, leaving a surplus of £835,000; though he regretted that this would crumble away before the farther statement which he was compelled to make, respecting interest due on the West Indian loan, which would probably reduce the available surplus to about £150,000 or £200,000. Under these circumstances, although he entered into various details to show the increasing prosperity of the country, he could not promise any great reduction in taxation. The reduction made was confined to the impost on licenses for the sale of spirits, which had been increased fifty per cent. by lord Althorp; to the duty paid on flint glass, now reduced from sixpence to twopence a pound; and to the relief of Ireland from the stamp duty now chargeable on awards, which amounted only to £500 per annum; but which operated to prevent the lower orders from resorting to that mode of terminating disputes. These resolutions were agreed to by the house without a division.

The only one of our colonies which particularly claimed attention from parliament, was that of Canada, distracted by the French or democratic party, which had gained a majority in the house of assembly, and determined to control both the legislative council and the governor. Mr. Roebuck, member for Bath, a perfect representative of their opinions, and a paid agent for advocating their cause in parliament, presented a

petition on the ninth of March, setting forth their alleged grievances; which lost nothing in virulence by passing through his hands: among these were the appropriation of funds for the education of catholics, to the support of the established church; and the conversion of the jesuits' college into military barracks—the establishment of the land company, under a grant from the crown, which interfered with the rights of Canadian subjects—the tenures act, which was stated to be another attempt to interfere with the internal regulations of this colony—and the rejection, by our colonial secretary, of a bill passed in the legislative assembly, for rendering the judges independent of the crown, and paying the salaries out of the reserved territorial fund. Much abuse also was vented against lord Stanley, as well as against the Canadian governor, lord Aylmer: Mr. Roebuck also declared the legislative council of the colony to be a moral pest; and that the people were justified in demanding one, formed agreeably to their own desires, and over which they could exercise some species of control. 'If this were not done,' he added, 'Lower Canada would inevitably follow the example of the United States; nigh at hand were 13,000,000 republicans, who, as soon as the flag of rebellion should be unfurled, would rally round it, and trample our whole establishment in the dust: a separation of the two countries would be a lamentable thing; but if the present pernicious course of governing this colony was to be continued, he declared, that the sooner the Canadians got rid of our dominion the better.'

Mr. Spring Rice and lord Stanley, after noting the bad tendency of this language, vindicated the general conduct of our government; which, so long back as 1828, had appointed a committee to examine into the complaints of the Canadians; which committee had honestly and indefatigably probed all grievances to the core, and suggested adequate remedies for every evil. Its recommendations had met with warm praise even from the popular party in Canada; but it was much to be regretted, that the state of political matters at home had prevented its recommendations from being duly considered and carried out. Complaints, irritation, distrust, and misconception between the government and assembly ensued, which ended in ninety-two resolutions of the legislative assembly brought before parliament last year. A new committee was then appointed, of which Mr. Roebuck was himself a member: every document in possession of the colonial office was laid before it; agents sent over by a majority of the house of

assembly were admitted to substantiate their charges; Mr. Roebuck was distinctly asked whether he had anything more to state, and lord Stanley whether there was anything from government to submit; when this committee made a general report, to which Mr. Roebuck himself, who now blamed government, was a consenting party—‘that the most earnest desire has existed on the part of the home government to carry into effect the suggestions of the committee of 1828; that its endeavors to that end have been unremitting, and guided by a desire in all cases to promote the interests of the colonies; and that in several important particulars their endeavors had been intirely successful.’ Sir Robert Peel, who was at the head of administration when this discussion arose, said, ‘that the recent change of ministers had not prejudiced the consideration of this question, nor was it likely to delay its settlement. The subject had already occupied the attention of the colonial secretary; and his majesty’s government lost no time in signifying an intention of definitively settling the dispute, and authorising lord Aylmer to lay before the house of assembly such information as ought to lead to the most satisfactory results; giving him full discretionary powers, to save time and prevent inconvenience, or fresh embarrassments. Ministers, however, were not prepared to declare any new principles of government, though ready to review the several causes of complaint, ascertain their justice, and redress every real grievance in a spirit of conciliation: in such a spirit they were determined to proceed, regardless of menaces, and feeling assured, that, in the event of a resort to arms, America would not join our rebellious colonies.’ The result showed what reliance was to be placed on American democrats, or the restraining power of their federal government.

On the tenth of September his majesty brought this long session to a close by a speech, in which, after stating the friendly assurances of foreign powers, and his endeavors to terminate the evils of civil war which were desolating the northern provinces of Spain, he congratulated the nation on the treaties which he had induced Denmark, Sweden, and Sardinia to sign for the extinction of the African slave-trade, expressed his approbation of the reform effected in English municipal corporations, and spoke of a happier state of things as existing in Ireland, where the severity of penal enactments had been suffered to expire.

Although the radicals and Irish catholics, by a junction with the whigs, had enjoyed the triumph of expelling a con-

servative ministry, yet so steadily had the encroachment of democracy been counteracted by the upper house of parliament, that no success appeared likely to attend them, while this constitutional bulwark was allowed to retain its authority, as well as its place, among our institutions. Motions were accordingly announced in the lower house, by Messrs. Roebuck, Rippon, and Hume, for curtailing its powers, which were denominated abuses, and for rendering the house of peers a fit and proper instrument of legislation—that is, of such legislation as might be approved of by democrats.

On the rising of parliament Mr. O'Connell commenced a progress, or mission, as he termed it, to propagate this doctrine in the north of England, and among the presbyterians of Scotland: but the arch-agitator was doomed to meet with a signal disappointment; being wholly discountenanced by the respectable classes of society, and applauded only by the ignorant rabble, or by partisans whose opinions and views were in unison with his own: the result therefore of his crusade and his virulent invectives, injured not only his own cause, but that of the ministry of whose alliance he had boasted, and whose interests, as identified with his own, he had pretended to be serving: the good sense of the country now took alarm, and most thinking persons, among those who desired to see our institutions purged from dross, became still more anxious to retain the gold.

In the beginning of the present year intelligence was received from the Cape of Good Hope, relating to irruptions by the Caffres, which exposed some of our settlements to much danger; whilst in our West Indian islands, the great experiment of relaxing the laws relative to slaves, came into operation, without realising the gloomy apprehensions of those who feared lest stubborn idleness with all its attendant evils might succeed to compulsory labor: some instances of bad conduct, arising chiefly from ignorance of the law, occurred; but these were easily subdued by the magistrates and police force; except indeed in Jamaica, where a stronger spirit of insubordination led to the farther evil of involving the legislature of that colony in disputes with its executive; principally because the demands of the planters for a larger number of stipendiary magistrates had been refused; though at last conceded. When sir Robert Peel entered on office, he found that nothing had been done in Lower Canada since the committee of the commons had made their report in July, 1834; and the irritation of the French or democratic party had been

increased by a dissolution, whilst its power was not diminished by the result of the new elections. Lord Aylmer therefore was recalled, merely because the relation in which he stood to the popular branch of the colonial legislature, obstructed a settlement of the question; though this step was viewed by the constitutional party, and even by a portion of the more respectable French inhabitants, with regret; as a sacrifice of the royal prerogative to the clamors of a faction opposed to the authority of Great Britain. Ministers however having resolved to send out as governor a person, who should also be authorized, as his majesty's commissioner, to inquire into and redress all real grievances, they selected lord Amherst for that important post; but just at this time the Peel cabinet was dissolved; and the arrangement of Canadian affairs left to that which succeeded it: in the mean time the colonial legislature had been assembled after a new election in the beginning of the year. The assembly of the previous year, in a spirit of revenge, because government had refused a bill to render elective the upper house, had refused the funds necessary to carry on public business; and the salaries of all public servants were in arrear: for this, and other urgent reasons, lord Aylmer, under the instructions of our colonial secretary, had advanced £31,000 from the military chest; and this, as an unauthorised expenditure of public money, was now added to the list of grievances. A large majority of the new house belonged to the political party of its predecessor: Mr. Papineau, the head of that party, was again elected speaker in opposition to government; and the first measure of the house, even before taking into consideration the governor's opening speech, was to pass a resolution for expunging from their journals that with which he had closed the preceding session; on the ground that it implied a censure on their proceedings in having transmitted petitions, complaining of ninety-two grievances, to the British parliament; and that such censure was an infringement of their privileges. In the address voted in answer to his speech, they insisted on the illegality of money having been advanced, which they had not appropriated; and repeated that demand regarding a change in the constitution of the legislative council, which had rendered a refusal of the supply bill unavoidable: the strong terms which these remonstrances employed, were confirmed by immense majorities of the house.

In the mean time, while they left the civil service of the colony, and even the administration of justice, unprovided for, they passed 'the agent's bill,' for paying a salary of £600 per

annum, and £500 for contingencies, to Mr. Roebuck, as their parliamentary agent in England; which measure was properly thrown out by the council, as intended to promote the very destruction of that body. Their next step was to provide for their own expenses; and on the third of March, they voted an address to the governor, to sanction the appropriation of £18,000 for payment of arrears and current allowances to members, together with some other contingent charges: and when his excellency answered, that, as matters stood, this request demanded grave consideration, and appeared to involve constitutional questions of grave import, opposition members abandoned the house; so that on the nineteenth of March he was under the necessity of adjourning the session.

On the restoration of the Melbourne cabinet, it adhered to the plan determined on by the preceding administration; but instead of vesting the powers of commissioner in the government alone, it appointed lord Gosford to the latter situation, at the head of a commission consisting of other members. These commissioners arrived at Quebec about the end of August; and the new governor met the legislature on the twenty-seventh of October; when he addressed the two houses in a long speech explaining those purposes for which he had been sent in his double capacity; and setting forth the remedies which he was authorized to apply to several of their alleged grievances—such, for instance, as the preference of the English language over the French, and that of British Canadians over those of French origin, for public offices—the holding of incompatible offices—the non-communication of despatches between the colonial and home governments—interference in elections—the calling for extra-judicial opinions from the judges on matters which might subsequently come before their tribunals—the too frequent reservation of bills for the signification of his majesty's pleasure, and too great delay in communicating his decision. His lordship stated that he was authorized to sanction the grants for their personal expenses, which had been reserved for consideration; and also to place under the control of the representatives of the people, all public monies payable to his majesty, or to his provincial officers, which arose from taxes or any other Canadian source; observing however that this cession could not be allowed, except on conditions to be maturely weighed; to arrange which was one of the chief objects of the commission at the head of which his majesty had placed him.

After various other topics, his excellency, in allusion to the

disputes between the two houses, concluded by holding up to imitation the conduct of the peers and commons of England, in regard to municipal corporations; whose differences of opinion had been always accompanied by mutual forbearance and respect. He did not announce any intention of conceding to the party in opposition the conversion of the legislative council into an elective body; but neither did he declare frankly and decidedly that this point would not be yielded. It formed, he said, one of those topics which the commissioners would take into consideration, and after full evidence and information, would submit, with their conclusions, to his majesty.

The house of assembly however in their address did not suffer this last subject to be evaded; but strongly pressed upon the governor's attention an extension of the elective principle, and its application to the constitution of the legislative council—also a repeal of the acts passed in Great Britain on matters relating to the internal government of the province, and interfering with the privileges of their provincial legislature—both being essential to the prosperity and happiness of Canadians, as well as to the maintenance of their attachment to the British crown. They received with pleasure the concession of a more extended control over the revenue payable to his majesty; but carefully avoided giving any pledge for paying the £30,000 which government had advanced; and rather hinted that such a demand was fitted to disturb the harmony which his excellency was so anxious to establish: their first act however was to repeat the useless insult offered to the legislative council, by sending up again the agent's bill for the appointment of Mr. Roebuck. The council feeling that they could not, without compromising their own respectability, sanction intercourse with a man who had declared that body to be a nuisance, and pay for a firebrand out of the public purse, rejected the bill; on which occasion the house of assembly at once gave the appointment to Mr. Roebuck; and resolved to pay his salary out of the public money allowed to them for their own contingencies.

The detail of these disputes relating to Canada will leave us less room for that of foreign and domestic occurrences; but it was absolutely necessary for enabling the reader to understand the peculiar relations at this time existing between the mother country, and that important colony, which led to subsequent events of deepest interest. Canada, indeed, may be considered as the grand western branch of that enormous

empire, held by Great Britain in the two hemispheres; an empire larger than any which the world ever saw; and one calculated to excite the envy and jealousy of all other nations. The strength of Canadian attachment to Great Britain, weakened by the French catholics who were left in possession of their territorial rights at our conquest, and endangered by the contiguity of American democrats, was now to be tried; and it was perhaps fortunate for Great Britain that these disputes came at this time to a head, and occasioned an outbreak, which not only disclosed all the insidious designs of our American neighbors, and proved the staunch loyalty of British settlers, but stimulated the general apathy of government, to attempt that reform in our colonial legislation which is absolutely necessary to maintain our colonial supremacy. It is almost impossible to overrate the importance of her colonies to a great naval power like that of England; more especially as the increased cultivation and prosperity of foreign possessions is rapidly advancing the power and resources of rivals, which are already found to embarrass us in our commercial and political negotiations. During a fearful struggle of nearly a quarter of a century, what more than her colonies enabled her to resist all antagonists, by manning those fleets which bore her flag triumphant over the ocean, and supplying her with pecuniary resources from the vast trade which they carried on under her direction? In the event of any future war, similar resources will be required, in proportion as other European nations, and particularly those of North America, advance in colonial prosperity. England, said one of her greatest statesmen, never can have a *little war*; neither can she exist as a *little nation*: she must march in the first rank, or sink rapidly into the lowest: to avoid this fate, she must cherish and maintain those vast colonial possessions, which give employment to her capital and afford profitable outlets to her manufactures: while she rules these possessions with kindness and discretion, it will be long ere they desire to throw off her maternal yoke for self-government; nor, while she commands the sea, can any foreign power take them from her: they can have no schemes of rivalry opposed to her commercial prosperity; and whenever the policy of *free trade* comes to be seriously discussed by our legislature, this question ought to be considered as one of momentous importance—whether it be better to make large concessions to our colonists, who must naturally be grateful for commercial advantages, or to rivals and foreigners, who, like M. Guizot, laugh at our

simplicity and retain their own prohibitory duties. France during this year was agitated by state trials, by legislation for limiting the licentiousness of a press which threatened to subvert all the principles of government, and by an attack on the king's life, in which marshal Mortier and many other individuals were slain: the assassin was a Corsican named Fieschi, whose atrocious act is too notorious to need a particular description. No rest from strife and massacre yet came to miserable Spain, torn and distracted by military revolts, and juntas usurping the powers of government; though our cabinet this year made some effort to mitigate the evils of this wretched country, by sending lord Eliot on a benevolent mission to induce both royalists and Carlists to abstain from putting their prisoners to death. A new feature however in the civil contest was the arrival of a British auxiliary legion, which colonel Evans, a distinguished officer in the great peninsular war, consented to command. Portugal this year saw the marriage of its young queen, as well as the termination of that celebrated Methuen treaty by which its commercial intercourse with Great Britain had so long been regulated; also a convention, made in a better spirit than that which generally actuates the peninsular councils, was concluded with Spain for a free navigation of the Douro by the subjects of each country through which it flows. The states of Holland were occupied in improving their judicial system, endeavoring to remedy the depressed state of agriculture, and planning an arrangement of the Belgian debt; while the Belgian chambers confined their deliberations chiefly to the protection of their cotton manufactures by prohibitory duties, and of internal tranquillity by the passing of an alien bill.

Prussia, strong and prosperous both in her foreign and domestic affairs, proceeded to bring to a conclusion her grand scheme of uniting all the Germanic states in one body, so far as the duties on exports and imports were concerned: the whole frontier of Germany toward France was now comprehended in the Zollverein, except the free city of Frankfort and the duchy of Nassau. The former of these territories, surrounded by the custom-houses of the new Union, found it desirable to send an agent to London, about the end of this year, to remove, through negotiation, the only obstacle to its junction; which lay in a commercial treaty lately concluded with Great Britain. Such an envoy was not likely to find much difficulty with our government; which for several years pasth as resigned nothing with greater equanimity than the

European markets for exports : in the mean time the removal of old restrictions, and the opening of free intercourse between the Germanic states, had already begun to develop numerous sources of wealth in every part of that extensive empire, which till this time were comparatively unknown. All this taught the Germans to appreciate the advantages of free and unrestricted commerce ; and had they reasoned well, they might have learned, that the same principles, from the adoption of which among themselves they were reaping such advantages, required only to be carried out to an intercourse with other nations, in order to secure still greater benefits : but, blind to the true cause of their nascent prosperity, no sooner did the manufacturing interests acquire sufficient importance to influence the policy of the union, than all their efforts were directed to increase the protective duties on their respective products, and thus re-establish, under a different form, the restrictions from which they had recently freed themselves. Austria lost by death her emperor ; but in retaining prince Metternich at the head of government, she retained all her peculiar influence in the European confederation. Nothing occurred in the minor states of Germany which calls for special notice ; but a remarkable interview took place at Warsaw between the Polish authorities and the emperor Nicholas, on his return from interviews with the Prussian and Austrian monarchs at Kalisek and Toplitz ; when the autocrat addressed the deputation in a calm, severe, and taunting speech, declaratory of the rigorous and inflexible principles on which Poland was to be governed ; plainly avowing that she was thenceforth to be treated as a Russian province. Under the peculiar circumstances of this unhappy nation, without leaders or union at home, and cut off from the assistance, if not from the sympathy, of foreign governments, it would have been fortunate for her, if her rulers and people had paid greater attention to much sensible, judicious, and even kind advice, mingled in the stern reproofs and threats of their imperial despot.

At the end of last year the seat of the Greek government had been transferred from Nauplia to Athens, with a view to the approaching majority of the boy-king ; that leaden weight placed on the nascent energies of Greece by the very nations who had done so much for the purpose of bringing them into action. On the first of June, this year, Otho I. assumed the reins of government ; and scarcely had his first proclamation announced blessings of all kinds to his new subjects, when almost all offices in the state were transferred from Greeks to

Germans; native troops were disbanded and replaced by Bavarian regiments; the national revenues were perverted to the most unconstitutional purposes; while dissensions and consequent insubordination arrived at such a pitch, that the king of Bavaria himself thought it expedient to visit Athens, for the purpose of aiding his son by personal influence and advice.

Turkey, by the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, had been laid prostrate at the feet of Russia; which latter power exercised almost uncontrolled authority over the divan; whilst England and France, whose short-sighted policy led to this result, were soon made to feel that Russia did not mean to let her influence lie unexerted; for a passage into the Black Sea, secured to her by the above-mentioned treaty, was denied to armed vessels of the other two countries; and our ambassador, lord Durham, when he arrived at Constantinople in a British man-of-war, on his circuitous journey to St. Petersburg, was obliged to transfer himself and his suite from the Barham to an unarmed vessel. Insurrections, so common in this disjointed, ill-governed empire, disturbed the tranquillity of Albania, Servia, and Kurdistan; while Mahomet Ali, secretly and openly assisted by French agents, was consolidating that power over the Syrian provinces wrested from his liege lord, which afterwards led to such important consequences. In Persia a civil war arising from the rival pretensions of the sons of Feth-Ali Khan, who died last year, a war of which Russia would scarcely have failed to take advantage, was stopped by the wise and able conduct of our envoy sir John Campbell.

During this year the government of North America, after much blustering, received proposals, which were subsequently accepted, for the mediation of Great Britain to settle her disputes with France;⁹ though with true democratic insolence and injustice she rejects even the *award* of mediators on disputed points with her mother country. A report, however, from the secretary of her treasury this year, disclosed a fact, which deserves to be recorded among the most extraordinary circumstances in modern statistics—the complete payment of her national debt—unless indeed the repudiation of her debts subsequently contracted, should appear still more extraordinary; an act which has indefinitely protracted the development of her resources, and bound her to keep the peace in a still stronger

⁹ These regarded the payment of losses sustained by American subjects under pretext of the Berlin and Milan decrees.

bond than that with which our unrepudiated debt represses the warlike energies of Great Britain. With regard to the internal affairs of a land pretending to freedom, we may observe, that atrocious massacres and insurrections against parties who advocated the abolition of slavery, exhibited that habitual contempt for law, which exists in this country, whenever passion or interest may desire to throw off its restraints. The states of the southern continent were still distracted by dissensions, insurrections, plots, and treasons, which it were lost time to notice, farther than by pointing to them as examples how fatal to real liberty and public tranquillity are republican institutions. The tranquillity of that slave-importing empire Brazil, was this year disturbed by an extensive insurrection of its negroes; and Bahia was exposed to those dangers from which violators of the eternal laws of justice must never expect to be free.¹⁰ Among the domestic occurrences of our own nation during this year, few are found to deserve particular notice.

The first report of the church commission, relating to episcopal dioceses, revenues, and patronage, was given in; as also was that of the commissioners of public instruction in Ireland. With regard to the king, political parties sometimes insinuated an indifference in his mind toward the interest of our reformed protestant church; which his majesty unequivocally contradicted by his energetic replies both to the laity, and to the clergy in convocation; while this year, though his increasing infirmities did not permit him to accompany her, his amiable consort paid a visit to our most ancient seat of theological learning at Oxford; where her majesty, accompanied by the grand duchess of Saxe Weimar, was received in the theatre, by the duke of Wellington, and other high officers of the University; degrees in civil law were conferred on several personages in her suite; nor were loyal addresses from the university, the city, the

¹⁰ No nation in either hemisphere has carried out its slaving propensities to a higher pitch than Brazil, ungrateful for benefits and unmindful of stipulations, promises, or treaties with Great Britain: moreover by matrimonial alliances it happens that this degraded empire has fixed its roots in so many royal and imperial families, all anxious to keep up its hatred toward Great Britain, and to cut off its commercial ties with her, that we can scarcely hope for an European ally to join with us in extirpating this odious traffic. Yet a new light has sprung up, and new hopes, and new allies, even in the slave-holding and slave-breeding states of North America, who are becoming decidedly hostile against slave importation and ready to join us in its suppression; especially as there exist some ancient treaties by which both England and America can treat Brazilian slave-traders as pirates.

county, and the diocesan clergy, omitted. After holding a drawing-room, and visiting the most remarkable buildings in this magnificent seat of learning, the queen proceeded by way of Blenheim, for the rival warrior's seat at Strathfieldsaye. Previously to this, on the third of August, both their majesties went in state by water, accompanied by the lord mayor and other civic authorities, to visit Greenwich hospital; where they were loyally welcomed by sir Thomas Hardy, the companion and friend of our immortal Nelson; who conducted his royal guests through the numerous apartments, where everything connected with the comfort of their brave occupants was accurately inspected by the 'sailor king,' and elicited his warmest approbation.

Having adverted to this splendid asylum for the veteran defenders of our sea-girt land, I consider it an imperative duty to call public attention to the lamentable state of neglect under which that other branch of naval service, our merchant marine, has long lain. Surely while we are so ready to build galleries for paintings, museums for natural history, and halls for science, we might afford a little philanthropy to prepare an asylum for those who go down to the sea in frail barks, and encounter perils in the great waters far more appalling than are met by those who ride over the waves, comparatively secure in Britannia's floating bulwarks: yet these men, to whom the safe conduct of our vast commercial wealth is intrusted, are in case of old age, or a worn-out constitution, generally consigned to hopeless penury. There is scarcely a subject which more deserves the attention of an enlightened statesman than this: but such an one must not confine his exertions to the building of a hospital: the whole system of our merchant service demands great improvement and reform; more especially in the employment of proper vessels, and the appointment of proper and efficient officers, whose authority ought to be defined with some degree of certainty; for as the case now stands, the masters of merchant vessels may be, and too often are, the greatest tyrants on earth; and the atrocities they commit against their crews almost exceed belief; nor is any verification of a log required at the end of a voyage, nor is any journal open for the insertion of observations by the mariners. In the royal navy the authority of the captain is so circumscribed by the rules of the service; so checked by his inferior officers, all men of education; and so modified by his own self-respect, that his subordinates are in little danger from its exercise; while, on the other hand, the master of a mer-

chantman is often the only person even of moderate education in the ship; his inferior officers being but little raised in this respect above those who work the vessel: and if, at the end of a voyage, such a man is charged with the most atrocious cruelties, public sympathy always goes with him; the tender-hearted officers of our police courts, seem to throw every possible difficulty in the way of a deposition, and exact the smallest bail; while even the judges on our tribunals look with very merciful eyes on his case: but let a poor wretch of a mariner be charged with an offence on the high seas, and the whole field is up against him with the cry of mutiny; a severe example must be made; and gross injustice is often committed. These are long-standing evils; and to some of them we owe those lists of wrecks with which in this and other countries extensive lines of coast are often covered. Our merchant navy is larger than the fleets of the whole world combined: why should such an arm of power be any longer neglected?

CHAPTER LXIX.

WILLIAM IV. (CONTINUED.)—1836.

Opening of parliament and king's speech—Addresses, &c.—Measures relating to Ireland—Leading measures relating to England—Ecclesiastical commission, &c.—English municipal act—Free conference—Bill to allow counsel to felons—and to remunerate medical witnesses—For abolition of imprisonment for debt—Bill regarding a division of the office of lord chancellor—Acts and motions of Mr. O'Connell, &c.—Agricultural distress, &c.—Motion by the marquis of Chandos relating to it—Other motions—The budget—Affairs of the Mauritius—Discussions on the Canadian discontents—Affairs of foreign nations; Spain, Poland, Russia—Proposals for an address to liberate the prisoners at Ham—Affairs of Greece—Close of the session—King's speech—Affairs in Ireland—Affairs of Canada—Jamaica—France—Spain and Portugal—Holland and Belgium—Germanic diet—United States—States of South America—Domestic occurrences—Death of lord Stowell—Private life of their majesties—State of parties at the beginning of 1837—Opening of parliament by commission—King's speech—Address, &c.—State of Ireland—Protestant meeting in Dublin—Motion for a bill to amend the Irish municipal corporations—Debates thereon; discussions upon lord Mulgrave's government—Debates on the Irish municipal bill—Poor-laws for Ireland—Irish tithe question—Irish national education—Question of church-rates—Ministerial plan for their abolition—Conduct of sir F. Burdett—Failure of church-rate abolition scheme, &c.—Motions for many organic changes in the constitution; and failure of them—Debates on the poor-law, and committee of inquiry—Canadian affairs—State of the banking system and money concerns—Crisis in the American trade, abuses, &c.—Foreign policy of the whigs, especially regarding the peninsula—Affairs of Russia; the United States, Mexico, and Texas—Colonial affairs; Canada, &c.; Jamaica; New South Wales—France—Spain—Portugal—Austria—Germany—Belgium and Holland—Switzerland—Italy and Sicily—Sweden and Norway—Greece—Russia and Circassia—Turkey—United States—Mexico, &c.—British parliamentary affairs—State of parties—Speech of Mr. Roebuck against ministers—Views of ministers—Illness and death of the king—Proclamation of queen Victoria.

On the fourteenth of February, his majesty opened parliament by a speech of unusual length, in which after testifying his

satisfaction in meeting its members, and giving the usual assurance of friendly relations with the various European powers, he alluded more particularly to the intimate union happily subsisting between this country and France, which he considered as a pledge to Europe for the continuance of peace. He then expressed confidence in the happy result of his mediation between France and the United States; also his deep anxiety, and measures taken, to stop the civil contest raging with such violence in Spain; at the same time intimating that he had given directions for a treaty to be laid before them, concluded with the queen of that country for the suppression of the slave-trade. Congratulating them on the state of commerce and manufactures, he felt obliged to lament, and recommended the adoption of measures to alleviate, the distress still existing among our agricultural classes. His majesty then alluded to a farther report of the church commission which was in a state of preparation; to a plan intended for their consideration regarding commutation of tithes: he recommended them to consider whether measures might not be framed to remedy any grievances which affect those who differ from the doctrines or discipline of the established church; and whether some amendments in the administration of justice, more especially in the courts of chancery, might not be devised. He trusted that they would be able to effect a just settlement of the question regarding Irish tithes; as well as a reformation of municipal abuses in that country, on principles similar to those which guided them in legislating on the like abuses in England and Scotland. After alluding to a farther report from the commission of inquiry into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland, soon to be laid before them, he concluded by expressing a firm reliance on their prudence, wisdom, and determination to maintain, as well as to amend, the laws and institutions of their country.

In the upper house, the address was moved by the duke of Leinster, and seconded by the earl of Burlington; and the only part of it, to which any objection arose, was the passage expressed in the royal speech relating to Irish corporations; in which it was recommended, that they should be reformed 'on principles similar to those in the acts passed for England and Scotland.' These words raised at once a leading question between contending parties; for those acts established a £5 franchise in one country and a £10 one in the other: but to follow this example, would be to transfer to the papists that monopoly of municipal authority which had hitherto been

enjoyed by protestants. The duke of Wellington therefore strongly protested against any such pledge, and proposed an amendment, to the effect 'of their proceeding without delay to consider any defects or evils shown to exist in these institutions, for the purpose of applying remedies to all just causes of complaint.' He was answered by lord Melbourne; but other peers having supported his grace's amendment, and the defeat of the government appearing inevitable, if the question went to a division, the marquis of Lansdowne declared that ministers were not unwilling to leave out the objectionable clause, which was never intended to pledge the house: and with this concession the amendment was agreed to.

As the government felt itself stronger in the lower house, a similar objection there did not find the same spirit of concession: to the address; which echoed the speech, and was moved by sir John Wrottesley, seconded by Mr. Parker, member for Sheffield, sir Robert Peel made an objection similar to that of the duke of Wellington; which he supported by cogent reasons, and concluded with a similar amendment; in which he was opposed by lord John Russell, lords Howick and Palmerston, and Mr. O'Connell; being supported by lord Stanley, Mr. Hardy, and Mr. Shaw: the question was here pressed to a division; when the original address was carried by a majority of 284 votes against 243.

As Ireland had thus presented the first subject of debate, so it continued to furnish, during this session, the principal topics to which public attention was directed, because they were those in which the opposing parties most fiercely assailed each other. Mr. O'Connell and his adherents lost no time in returning to their attacks on the Orange societies; when, after much vehement discussion, an address was agreed to and presented to his majesty; who, on the twenty-fifth of February, returned a gracious answer, expressing ready assent to its prayer, 'that he would be pleased to take such measures as may seem to him advisable for the effectual discouragement of Orange lodges, and generally of all political societies excluding persons of a different religious faith, using secret signs or symbols, and acting by associated branches.' After this expression of opinion the obnoxious societies generally acquiesced; some with greater and others with less readiness; but all setting an example, which cannot be said to have been followed by the many mischievous associations set on foot by popish demagogues, to extend their political and religious power, in defiance of our legislature.

The next measure regarding Ireland involved to a far greater extent the relation in which protestants and catholics were to stand towards each other. After the reform of municipal corporations in England and Scotland, it was manifest that a similar demand would be made for Ireland; where the question would assume a more difficult and important character, involving religious as well as political considerations. To open the Irish corporations would be not merely the enlargement of a political franchise, but a transfer of all power from the protestants who had hitherto exercised it, to the great body of papists: both parties might be equally admitted in name; but, in practice, all boroughs would be brought under the control of catholic ecclesiastics and demagogues; while the powers of municipal government would be placed in the hands of a population too ignorant and rude to use them well: but although this danger was obvious, the example had been set in England and Scotland; the rule had been laid down; and a royal commission had made a report very unfavorable to the existing state of municipal government in Ireland, concluding with these words: 'As at present constituted, they (the corporations) are, in many instances, of no service to the community; in others, injurious; in all insufficient, and inadequate to the proper purposes and ends of such institutions: the public distrust in them attaches to their officers and nominees; while the result is a failure of respect for, and confidence in, the ministers of justice and police.'

Proceeding on this report, the attorney-general for Ireland introduced a bill for the better regulation of municipal corporations in that country; the evils and abuses of which he proposed to remedy by placing them, as had been done in England and Scotland, under effective popular control, and annihilating their partial and exclusive character. It is hardly necessary to enter into a detailed account of this measure; which, after long occupying the attention of parliament, and stimulating Mr. O'Connell and his adherents to raise a violent clamor for justice to Ireland, was finally lost on the thirtieth of June; when the amendments of the lords were rejected by the commons. The same fate befel the other great party question, respecting the commutation of Irish tithes; a measure which ministers resolved to re-introduce in the same shape which it had borne the previous year; not only containing those provisions for diminishing the amount, and regulating the collection of tithes, which removed their pressure from the occupier, and prevented collision between the payer and receiver; points

on which all parties were agreed; but clogged by the appropriation clause, which had been so strenuously resisted in the commons, and rejected by the lords. The resolution of ministers was, that however expedient and proper the other provisions of this measure might be, they ought not to be adopted unless accompanied by a declaration of the principle of appropriation; nothing less than which would satisfy the Irish papists. Their opponents answered, that the other provisions of the intended act would produce practical good, and remove all cause of complaint, except such as was directed against the existence of tithes in any shape; that the declaration of what was called the principle of appropriating a surplus was an absurdity, when no surplus existed; and that it was mischievous, because its necessary consequence and true meaning was, that a surplus, which did not exist, must be created by plundering the protestant church: that, even if a surplus did remain, after duly providing for that church, it ought to be appropriated only to protestant ecclesiastical purposes; and that, if it was true that Irish papists would not be satisfied unless some part of these funds were appropriated to other purposes, the true meaning of this was, that it was to be the first step in a design for overturning the protestant establishment altogether.

Undeterred by the fate of the municipal bill, and the general tendency prevailing in the kingdom to uphold the house of peers in its resistance to the encroachments of popery, ministers committed to lord Morpeth the task of introducing this measure into the house of commons; which he executed on the twenty-fifth of April, by moving a resolution which in itself tended to raise no party question; being merely,—‘that it is expedient to commute the composition of tithes in Ireland into a rent-charge, payable by the owners of estates; and to make further provision for the better regulation of ecclesiastical dues and revenues.’ The opposition agreed with government on the principle of commutation; but his lordship, in opening the scheme which ministers intended to incorporate in their bill, announced that the principle of appropriation would still be declared and acted on. In regard to the future regulation of the church revenues, government, he said, felt that they could not abandon those declarations and principles which they proclaimed when they entered upon office; that they could not shake off an engagement to which they considered themselves pledged, of doing justice to the Irish nation; the terms of which honourable compact they conceived to be, that if in a

future disposition of the Irish church revenue, something more than its legitimate and becoming uses require should arise, they ought, after the satisfaction of all existing interests, to apply that superfluity to the religious and moral education of the whole Irish people.

The above resolution being unopposed, a bill founded on it was brought in ; but its second reading was delayed by ministers till the first of June ; apparently with a view of ascertaining, by the fate of their corporation bill, what hopes they could entertain for the success of their appropriation principle. On that day lord Stanley moved, as an amendment, for leave to bring in a bill 'for the conversion of Irish tithe into a rent-charge ; and for the redemption thereof ; and for the better distribution of ecclesiastical revenues in Ireland.' In this it was stated, that the principle of appropriation would be utterly abandoned : but after long debates, his lordship's motion was rejected ; while that of ministers passed for a second reading by a majority of only thirty-nine ; a number so small as necessarily to seal its fate in the house of lords. On the motion for its going into committee, the ultimate designs and real wishes of the papists, which their more wily leaders either disclaimed or kept in the back-ground, were openly disclosed by Mr. Crawford, member for Dundalk ; and in committee the great Irish leader betrayed an angry conviction, that it would be impossible either to pass the bill, or to make it an instrument for raising any popular excitement against the other house. The only debate in committee arose on the question, whether the appropriation clause should stand as part of the bill ; since the opponents of the measure were determined to give the peers every support in their power ; and on a division, in a house of 554 members, ministers could only obtain a majority of twenty-six votes ; while the opposing minority contained a majority of English representatives. In this state of opinions, the ministerial bill was read a third time, and passed, on the fifteenth of July.

In the upper house its second reading was moved on the twenty-second ; and, after a brief explanation of its provisions by lord Melbourne, was agreed to without any division : on the twenty-fifth the house went into committee, and passed the bill on the twenty-eighth : but in the mean time they had made it, by overwhelming majorities, what the large minorities in the lower house had endeavored to make it ; striking out all its provisions for the appropriation of surplus, and modifying many of its most important arrangements. Thus amended,

the bill was rejected by the lower house, and fell to the ground.

The leading measures of this session, as far as regarded England, were all connected with the alleged grievances of dissenters: they consisted of a bill for the commutation of tithes; of another for the celebration of marriage by persons not belonging to the communion of the church of England; and a third for the registration of births and marriages. The first two subjects were by no means new: the necessity of commuting tithe had been frequently discussed; and sir R. Peel, during his short administration in 1835, had introduced, for that purpose, a bill with which the government that followed him did not proceed: his predecessors had proposed a measure for regulating dissenters' marriages; but it had been withdrawn, because it proved unpalatable to the parties chiefly concerned: a bill on the same subject had also been proposed by sir Robert Peel, and approved by those parties; but this also was dropped when he retired from office. The present ministers now undertook to deal with all these three subjects; and the bills which they brought in, though amended in the upper house, were passed, and finally became laws.

The ecclesiastical commission, appointed during sir Robert's administration, and continued by his successors, for the purpose of discovering if any useful changes could be made in the condition of the English church, so as to remove its anomalies, and secure its more effective pastoral superintendence, had made two reports; and the recommendations which they contained, arranged themselves under three heads; first, the ecclesiastical division of territory, and revenues of the different sees; secondly, the cathedral and collegiate revenues, which it was desirable to render more useful for our establishment; and, lastly, the avoidance of pluralities, and the residence of clergymen upon their benefices. A bill was brought into the house of lords, by the archbishop of Canterbury, to carry into effect the recommendations of the commissioners regarding pluralities and non-residence;¹ while lord John Russell introduced another into the lower house founded on those recommendations which regarded the re-modelling of episcopal sees, respecting territory and revenues; a third measure being brought in, at a later period, to carry the reports fully into

¹ In this was a clause for incorporating a board of commissioners, under the title of 'the ecclesiastical commissioners of England.'

effect, by providing for the suppression of various cathedral and collegiate preferments, as well as sinecure benefices. The second of these bills occasioned long and vehement debates, especially between ministers and the radicals; the latter being unwilling to see any improvement made in a system which they desired to overthrow: but, notwithstanding all opposition, it passed into a law; and ministers deferred the other bills, for reducing chapters and collegiate churches, suppressing sinecure benefices, and altering the distribution of ecclesiastical patronage. A short act, however, was passed, in order to prevent the creation, in the mean time, of more vested interests: by another the secular jurisdiction of the bishops of Durham and Ely was transferred from those prelates to the crown; and a bill 'for imposing certain restrictions on the renewal of leases by ecclesiastical persons,' passed into a law.

When the English municipal act came into operation, it was soon found that some of its details required amendment; and a bill for such purpose, introduced early this session, passed the house of commons; but when it came to a second reading in the upper house, the duke of Wellington and lord Lyndhurst pointed out the grave examination and careful consideration which many of its enactments required. This led to certain amendments; to all of which, when the bill returned to the commons, they agreed, with the exception of two—the first relating to the election of a mayor or alderman in certain cases; the second, and more important one, consisting in the insertion of a clause to continue for another year an arrangement contained in the municipal act, for the management of charitable trusts. No part of these new institutions had produced greater jealousy and feuds; the popular party who had seen the misappropriation and ruinous dilapidation occasioned by those who formerly held them, being eager to obtain possession; while the others, who put but little faith in the impartiality or honesty of democrats, insisted on some arrangement being made, which would prevent charitable funds from becoming prostituted to party purposes. It was mutual jealousy which prevented the final settlement of this matter in the municipal act itself, and left these funds in the hands of those who then held them, till the first of August, 1837; unless parliament, in the mean time, should make a different provision for them; and if it did not, then the lord chancellor was to appoint new trustees.

Mr. Smith, member for Southampton, had accordingly brought in a bill, for the administering such trusts by a system

of popular election; but it had not passed through committee when the present municipal bill was sent up to the peers; and it proceeded on a system which was not likely to be sanctioned by them: hence they had inserted the amendment relating to these trusts in the bill; to which clause, as well as to the other regarding the election of mayor and aldermen, the commons, on a motion of the attorney-general, refused to agree; and their reasons for this refusal were communicated to the lords, at a conference in the usual way. These reasons were taken into consideration by the peers, but had not sufficient weight to turn them from their amendments; or to prevent them from throwing out Mr. Smith's bill, on the second reading, by a majority of 39 to 22.

As the commons still adhered to their rejection of the two amendments made by the lords in the municipal bill, the only course left for them to pursue, was to demand a *free* conference; at which the matter in dispute is, or may be, debated between the managers, *vivâ voce*: this accordingly was asked for, on the tenth of August; but on account of the novelty of the proceeding, of which no instance had occurred since 1740, the consideration of their message was postponed till next day, when the desired conference was granted: but much to the dissatisfaction of Mr. Hume and others, who had expected a warm debate, it passed off without any discussion: and a motion made by lord Lyndhurst,—that the house should insist on it its amendments,—having been carried, a message was sent to the commons, requesting a *free* conference to communicate that result. The managers for both houses immediately met; the question of the amendments was regularly debated; but the discussion ended, as might have expected, by each party, retaining its previous opinions: accordingly, on the motion of lord John Russell, all farther consideration of the amendments was postponed till that day three months; and certain bills were brought in and passed, to supply some parts of the dropped bill, on which both houses were agreed.

The attempts, which had been made, more than once, to obtain an act for allowing felons the benefit of counsel to address a jury on their behalf, were attended with success in the present session; as also for altering the existing law respecting the execution of murderers; the new statute simply enacting, 'that sentence of death may be pronounced after conviction for murder in the same manner, and the judge shall have the same power in all respects, as after conviction

for other capital offences.' Another bill passed to remunerate medical witnesses brought before coroners' inquests: but a more important one, to abolish imprisonment for debt, was postponed at its second reading in the lords, on account of the advanced period in the session, and the weight of business pressing on the house. In accordance with a passage in his majesty's speech, the lord chancellor, on the twenty-eighth of April, brought forward a measure relating to the high office which he himself held: the great evil of the court of chancery was the want of an individual at its head, who could devote his time intirely to the performance of his judicial functions, without being called off to other duties; and to remedy this he proposed to divide the office of chancellor; distributing his employment between two judges, one of whom should be devoted exclusively to legal duties, and be irremovable, while the other retained the political functions and official patronage; coming in, and going out, with the ministers who appointed him. This measure, however, as well as a second bill connected with it, regarding the appellate jurisdiction of the house of lords, was thrown out, on a division for its going into committee; having been strongly opposed by the duke of Wellington, as well as by lords Abinger and Lyndhurst.

Much also of the time of parliament, this session, was occupied in considering the expensive and defective constitution of election committees—also with the extraordinary transactions of Mr. O'Connell respecting the representation of the county of Carlow; which reflected no great credit on the character of that gentleman; who, together with his colleague Mr. Ruthven, was unseated for Dublin, on the report of that election committee: against this a petition was presented, and rejected by the house; but the county of Kilkenny returned the great agitator to St. Stephen's; where, no long time after a motion made by Mr. Rippon, 'for expelling bishops from the house of lords, under the plea of their attendance being prejudicial to the cause of religion,' had been rejected, he gave notice that on the twenty-first of June he would move for leave to bring in a bill to reform that house itself by making its members elective: this announcement was received with shouts of laughter; nor did Mr. O'Connell himself seem to be in earnest with his motion; which he postponed from time to time, and finally announced his intention of moving for a committee early next session.

The complaints of the agricultural classes, which, for several years, had annually come before parliament, still continued,

accompanied by speculations, as various as ever, regarding the causes of this distress and its remedies. The enthusiastic advocates of free trade held, that a removal of all duties on the importation of grain would benefit the grower no less than the consumer: some proposed an alteration in the existing system of our currency; and others thought that no relief would be found but in a reduction of rents, and of those taxes, which were supposed to press peculiarly on agriculturists. Government took up the question early in the session, and wisely suspended the discussion of many questions relating to this topic by proposing the appointment of a select committee; on the ground, that, whenever any great branch of national industry becomes materially depressed, it is the duty of parliament to consider the facts of the case, and endeavor to apply a remedy: at the same time little hope appeared that the distress of the agriculturists could be removed by legislative interference; and in the course of debate it was denied, that, because ministers had proposed a committee, they were bound, as had been alleged, to be provided with any specific plan.

Before, however, any report of the committee could be given in, this distress of the agriculturists was brought forward, in another shape, by the marquis of Chandos; who urged the house to express its opinion that, in any reduction of taxation, the interests of agriculture ought particularly to be kept in view: he asked not for a partial, but for an equal distribution of burthens; declaring that during the last five years the amount of taxation repealed was upwards of eight millions; of which only half a million bore directly on landed interests, the overwhelming mass being distributed among the manufacturing classes; while these latter did not suffer from many imposts, which pressed most heavily on the farmer.

Lord John Russell objected to the motion, but on its own merits, and because he thought it premature to entertain such a question before the agricultural committee, then sitting, should have given in its report. A motion was made for repealing the additional duty on spirit licenses, as well as for reducing the pension list; and on the sixth of May the chancellor of the exchequer opened his budget. He first entered into a comparison of the actual amount of income and expenditure for the past year, with that at which they had been estimated; showing that, while nothing had fallen off from what he had anticipated, except about £24,000 in the miscellaneous estimates, on the whole revenue of the year the

receipts had exceeded the estimates by £838,000 : still in the actual expenditure, there had been an excess over the estimates of £134,000 ; but this was capable of explanation.

For the present year he estimated the expenditure as follows ; still setting aside the West India loan. The charge on the consolidated fund and for the interest of our national debt, would be £30,620,000 ; being £94,000 below the expenditure of last year : the army also would cost less by £154,000, the estimates being £6,327,000 ; but the navy would cost considerably more, because five thousand additional seamen had been voted, at a charge of £434,000, raising the sum this year to £4,680,000. The ordnance for the year he estimated at £1,263,000 ; being £10,000 lower than that of last year. The income of the preceding year had been £46,381,000 : for the present year he reckoned its amount at £46,980,000 ; while the total expenditure would be £45,205,807, leaving a surplus of £1,774,193 : but out of this apparent surplus, payment must be made on account of West India compensation during the year, to the amount of £1,111,633 ; leaving only the sum of £662,000 to be dealt with by parliament : from the state of the revenue, had it not been for the sums payable to West Indian planters, there would have been a surplus of two millions.

In applying this surplus to the reduction of taxation, he should select those taxes, the repeal of which would extinguish a source of fraud, rather than such as merely afforded present relief. He proposed therefore, in the first place, to consolidate the paper duties and reduce their present amount, while he repealed the whole duty on stained paper, which otherwise would pay doubly : this with a diminution of about £20,000 in the post-office department, consequent on the convention with France, a small diminution in probate duties, and a reduction of £10,000 in the South Sea annuities, would extinguish above £200,000 of the surplus ; the balance of which he intended to apply chiefly to the reduction of stamps on newspapers. The duty on these at present was fourpence, *minus* the discount ; which he proposed to reduce to one penny and to allow no discount : he did so, to protect the revenue ; since the sale of unstamped publications had become so extensive, that no series of prosecutions could put them down ; the loss arising from this reduction, supposing it calculated on the whole year, would amount to £200,000 ; but it would only accrue during three-quarters of the financial year ; and an enormous increase of revenue would take place from

the enlarged circulation of newspapers, duties on advertisements, and general consumption of paper. He next proposed to take off the duty from insurances on farming buildings, as lord Althorp had taken it from farming stock ; also to give up certain small branches of revenue, as the duty on taxed carts, and the additional fifty per cent. on spirit licenses ; for which latter he would find an equivalent in the increased consumption of spirits. The amount of all the taxes which he proposed to remit would be £351,000, this year ; though, when the proposed reductions came into full operation, it would amount to £568,000 : but when the increased consumption of paper was taken into account, the money collected from penny stamps, and the increase of advertisements, he did not expect to lose more than £530,000 during the second year.

Though the application of a great part of our surplus revenue, to the reduction of stamps on newspapers, was branded by many as a sacrifice to the demands of a political party ; and, in the debates which ensued, a reduction in the duties on soap, instead of it, was strenuously advocated, yet these proposals of the chancellor of the exchequer were, with a few alterations, assented to ; and the number of newspapers which now circulate through the British dominions is almost incredible.

For a considerable time unfortunate differences had prevailed in the Mauritius, between a portion of its inhabitants and the government authorities ; and between one part of the people and another : they were said to have originated in the desire of the white population to evade some requirements of the law for negro emancipation ; and were believed to have been aggravated by what was termed, on one side, the indiscretion, and on the other the honest determination of the colonial judges : more than one recal of such had taken place ; and the consequence was, that their successors, who did not pursue the same course, and the governors of the island, were denounced as guilty of abusing their powers to prevent a full and fair execution of the emancipation act. Mr. Roebuck, the colonial agent for Canada, with much more of justice now on his side, extended his protection to the people of the Mauritius ; and moved in the house of commons on the fifteenth of February,—for a select committee to inquire into the administration of justice in that colony. He stated that from the time of its cession to us in 1814, a party hostile to the power and supremacy of Great Britain had arisen, on account of her resolution to put down the slave

trade, and ameliorate the condition of the slave population. She had declared this trade a felony; and issued an order in council, to the effect that no governor, judge, registrar of slaves, or person connected with the administration of justice, should hold any species of slave property, directly, in trust, or in mortgage. Now he charged the whole body of those functionaries with holding slave property: he charged sir Charles Colville, the late governor, with speculating, and creating debts, in slave property: he charged chief justice Blackburne, the officers of the supreme court, and nearly all the functionaries of the island with the same gross violation of that order; proof of which was to be found in the despatches of government. At the time when the earl of Ripon was colonial secretary, the local authorities, intrusted with the task of making certain alterations in the island code of law concerning slaves, had so executed it, that the secretary plainly charged them with having acted in a spirit of bad faith, to protect the seditious, and disobey the injunctions of government at home. Armed associations were formed, ostensibly for the defence of the whites; but really to throw off the dominion of Great Britain: also a committee was formed, who became the true governors of the isle; and no one had a chance of obtaining justice, unless he were connected with one or both of these bodies.

‘A registration of slaves had been ordered, for the purpose of discovering if any had been illegally imported since our reception of the colony; and the burden of showing the legality of the property was properly thrown on its holders: but the slave-masters rose almost in open rebellion, to prevent this regulation from being carried into effect. In such an excited state of the island, Mr. Jeremie was sent out as *procureur-general*; when the governor and executive officers, conscious that they had been violating the law, and dreading his appearance among them, endeavored by all means to stop his disembarkation; but when he persevered and effected a landing, under the bayonets of the soldiers, he was met by a refusal to swear him into office: on this, he returned to England; but was immediately sent back, a new governor having been in the mean time appointed; and he was at last sworn in; but not till the executive was intirely in the hands of the colonial committee, and an extensive conspiracy formed for casting off the British yoke, under pretence of putting down slave insurrection. Lord Stanley then obtained the colonial seals, and for a whole year the Mauritius did not

receive a *single despatch*: he left the whole supreme court subject to a charge of treason, without the slightest investigation; and the administration of justice in the hands of men whose character and conduct had been impugned by the colonial secretary. After a year of such extraordinary negligence, lord Stanley rushed into unpardonable haste; and hearing only interested parties, he exculpated three judges from lord Ripon's charges. Mr. Jeremie, therefore, seeing no chance of justice being done in any inquiry by a tribunal, of which every member was a slave-holder, had excepted to them all, but the governor. The secretary to the colony was indebted to all the parties, whose fitness to be judges he was one appointed to try: the governor had made the inquiry a private one; and had examined witnesses without the privity of Mr. Jeremie; it was not extraordinary then that the accusation against the judges was negatived, and a charge exhibited against the *procureur-general*, for having stated, although he proved it; whilst, in consequence of instructions from lord Stanley, to suspend those who had made charges which they could not substantiate, the governor, sir W. Nicolay, sent home Mr. Jeremie and Mr. Reddie. The next colonial secretary, now chancellor of the exchequer, went a step farther, declaring that the accused judges were free from any stain in respect to these charges; and even all this did not satisfy the present secretary, who had re-appointed a certain gentleman to the office of *procureur-general*, from which lord Goderich had dismissed him as a slave-holder. The consequence of all these proceedings was, that slavery and its trade were re-established in the colony: the free laborer himself became partially a slave; for if he could not find employment within a month he was liable to banishment: even education could not be given without permission of the governor; and the liberty of the press was destroyed: moreover, so blameless and pure had the conduct of Mr. Jeremie been found, that since his return he had been appointed a judge at Ceylon, to which place he was hurried off by government, in order that certain delegates sent from the Mauritius might not have the benefit of his testimony; and they could only secure this, by engaging to pay his expenses for remaining and giving evidence, in case an inquiry should be instituted.'

However this statement may have been exaggerated, one would have thought that there was enough of startling matter in its charges against our government to induce its members,

for their own sake, to grant the committee of inquiry sought for. Instead of this, however, sir George Grey undertook to dilute them, by representing them as charges long abandoned by their original promoters, and the stories concerning dangerous disaffection and armed conspiracies against British dominion, as fictions only calculated to provoke a smile: and though the motion was strenuously supported by Dr. Lushington,² and Mr. Fowell Buxton, a gentleman well versed in the affairs of this colony, there was found neither honor nor courage enough in a whig ministry, and a reformed parliament, to submit such affairs, and their own conduct in them, to investigation: too great a portion of the old leaven remained in the mass; and the motion was negatived by a majority of 229 to 71.

A more lively interest was excited by discussions on the political discontents of Canada; a large portion of whose population, being French in its origin, democratic in its views, and instigated by intemperate demagogues leagued with others in this country, insisted on demands equally inconsistent with monarchical government and British supremacy; though it must be confessed, that the Canadians had long endured many grievances, arising from the dilatory nature of our colonial government at home. Mr. Roebuck, a man radical enough in his opinions to have formed one of the democratic leaders in the colony itself, was their defender and apologist in the British parliament; where, on the sixteenth of May, he brought forward a proposition for reforming the Canadian constitution; the principal aim of which was to render both branches of its legislature elective. By the statute 31 Geo. III. cap. 31, a constitution had been given to the province of Quebec, which thenceforward was divided into Upper and Lower Canada: this constitution was in most respects copied from that of England; a governor acting as the king's representative; a legislative council as the house of lords; and a house of assembly as that of our commons. 'His object,'

² 'After Mr. Jeremie,' said the learned gentleman, 'had been sent to the colony a second time in 1832, certain persons were by his order committed to prison, tried, and convicted; yet within an hour after the conviction, and the report being submitted to the governor, they were discharged: nay, the governor was actually required to bring Mr. Jeremie to trial for a capital offence, in having instituted this prosecution; and he was kept in suspense upwards of three months before this capital indictment against him was abandoned.' For a full account of these transactions, see *Annual Register* for 1836.

said Mr. Roebuck, 'was to amend the legislative council; which was, in fact, no more like our house of lords than the colonial governor was like the monarch of these realms; for its members, differing from our peers, were possessed of neither wealth nor property, having no tenants, and consequently, no influence over the people: they were a mere *clique*, holding power for their own particular purposes. Though this constitution had been given in 1791, it was not till 1810 that the Canadians were permitted to manage their own expenditure; and persons had been imprisoned for merely claiming such right of administration for the house of assembly, in order that it might obtain some control over public officers. This demand was refused by the legislative council; as also was a request made by the house of assembly, to allow the civil list of the colony to be, as here, permanent during the king's life. Then the British government itself proposed that the governor, judges, and secretary should be so secured as to salaries and retiring pensions: the salaries of the judges were made permanent by the house of assembly, and the proceeding was approved by lord Aylmer, then governor; but it was resisted by the council, great part of which was composed of public speculators. When sir R. Peel came into office in 1834, he found the Canadians demanding a responsible executive council, and that the legislative council should be rendered elective; he found them refusing to vote money until their grievances should be redressed; and he sent out a commission, not merely to inquire, but also to redress: yet the functions of this commission were unfortunately limited by his successors to the business of inquiry; the object of which was merely to gain time, and by delay to obtain all they wanted—money. Indeed, he was given to understand, that a distinct proposition had been made to the house of assembly, who were told, that if they voted the arrears of three years, and agreed to the civil list, those two measures would be accepted by the government, even though the legislative council should resolve to reject them: but sir Francis Head, being sent out to Upper Canada, published his instructions; and the house of assembly, when these were known, resolved not to grant the money required, though they passed a money bill for six months, which was rejected by the legislative council; and at the present moment the government has no money legally at its disposal. What was it then that the government intended to do? to repeal, as had been suggested by an act of the British parliament, the laws which placed

public money at the disposal of the Canadian people? If so, the British dominion would last there just so long as it could be maintained by military force, and no longer. The only way to bind the people of Canada permanently to this country, was to redress their manifold grievances, and to alter the constitution of their legislative council. What harm (said the honorable gentleman) could result from this proposition? It was objected to, as being American and republican. How puerile the argument! By what magic was an aristocracy, the growth of ages, to be formed in a day? That of England had existed ever since she was a nation; yet its influence was daily diminishing, while the feeling of equality was gaining ground: and if such were the case here, how could we expect to maintain an aristocracy in a new nation? But the existence of two parties in Canada, was made an argument for preserving the legislative council; which was said to represent the English party, as the French party was represented by the house of assembly; and which would become too predominant by the change proposed: but the number of persons speaking the English language in Lower Canada was about 134,000; while those speaking French amounted to 374,932; so that the English party was only about one-third of the French. Also the house of assembly contained eighty-eight members, sixty-four of whom were said to be of French origin; so that the English party bore a similar proportion to the representation: but then it was said, that all those English members did not vote with the government; undoubtedly not: and the same complaint was made in Upper Canada, where no French settlers existed; proving that the present demands proceeded from no narrow party considerations, but were founded on principle and justice: if, therefore, the British government attempted to continue the present kind of rule over Canada, its people would be driven to compare their condition with that of another nation closer to them; and thus a rapid and violent dissolution of the union would become inevitable. Another objection had been made to his proposition,—that if it were carried, the Canadian legislature would immediately seize on all the waste lands: but let it be remembered, that these lands were not the property of England, but of the Canadian people; and that, when once placed under their control, they would cease to be given away in jobs; and, being improved, would be made productive for the country.

No impartial person can deny that there was a considerable

degree of justice in these remarks of Mr. Roebuck ; however he may differ from that gentleman's opinion regarding the remedy to be applied. Ministers opposed the motion chiefly on the ground, that it was premature to entertain it, before the commissioners had reported the result of inquiries then going on. They denied that any evidence existed of so general a wish for change among the Canadians as would justify them in proposing it: but when, alas! was a change ever proposed to a British ministry, at a time which it considered mature, and with a wish which it consented to accept as a general one? No prudent person would recommend precipitate counsels: but it is not wise or humane always to wait until the bayonet must decide a controversy, and arguments proceed out of the cannon's mouth. In the present instance it certainly was expedient to wait until the necessity of so vital a change, as that required, was fully proved; and Mr. Roebuck was advised that he should trust to the promises of redress which were held out, and withdraw his motion: this he did; but with so bad a grace, that it justly provoked sir Robert Peel to remark, that the grounds on which his motion was withdrawn, were calculated to excite expectations in Canada; which, if not realised, would leave this question in a worse position than before.

In our foreign relations, the points which principally occupied parliamentary attention were those connected with the interference of Great Britain in the civil war now raging in Spain. The policy of this interference was described by Mr. Maclean, one of the members for Oxford, as unintelligible in itself, and inconsistent with any precedents; seemingly adopted, not to finish the contest, but to keep it alive; though it was manifest that all interference against Don Carlos, which did not put him down, would turn, in the event of his success, to the prejudice of this country: and he particularly called attention to the treaties made on this subject, and to the high contracting parties. Lord Palmerston vindicated the interference of Great Britain; which had consisted, first, in executing the quadruple treaty; secondly, in the order of council which, by suspending the foreign enlistment act, had enabled the British Legion to be formed, that was now serving in Spain: he illustrated this interference by numerous examples; pointed out our interests in the welfare of Spain under a constitutional government; and expressed his strong confidence in the queen's cause, founded as it was on the general principles of human nature, as well as the feelings of

the Spanish people. Sir Robert Peel thought that the somewhat vague principles by which our interference in the Spanish contest was now defended, went farther than any which had hitherto been propounded; and were not a little dangerous to the peace, independence, and freedom of other nations; making it clear that any government had a right to interfere in the domestic concerns of its neighbors. Sir J. C. Hobhouse, however, denied, that the promotion of the general principles of liberty, or the protection and advancement of our commercial interests, were vague or undefined principles; and insisted that ministers had done nothing but act up to the spirit of treaties by which this country was bound; and of which parliament had never disapproved. In the course of discussion both parties united in expressing their detestation of those cruelties by which the progress of this war was distinguished, among the partisans both of the queen and of Don Carlos: the following authenticated case is given as a specimen. A ferocious Carlist chief, named Cabrera, had been guilty of numerous excesses; but as he could not be taken, Mina, a general in the queen's service, ordered the aged mother of Cabrera to be seized and shot, as an example, according to instructions from the governor-general of the province: Cabrera instantly resorted to retaliation, and put to death in the first instance four ladies, the wives of Spanish officers; moreover threatening, that he would order every person on the queen's side, taken in arms, to be shot: in reply, Noguerras, her majesty's commander, notified that for every individual so sacrificed he would murder five innocent victims; to which the other monster Cabrera responded by a declaration that he would execute 20 of the opposite faction. Such is civil war—more especially in Spain: and for what a length of time did European nations make a false estimate of the Spanish character, early and constantly as it developed itself against the Jews and Moors in Spain, and the aborigines of South America! nothing could have broken the spell, except that display of it which has been made within the last thirty years.

The little republic too of Cracow, the only spot in Poland which retained a shadow of independence, had been occupied, in the beginning of this year, by a body of Russian, Austrian, and Prussian soldiers; in consequence of a remonstrance to an order sent by those three powers to its senate, for expelling all Polish refugees from its territory; many of whom had been long settled there in marriage, and had conducted themselves as peaceable citizens. Sir Stratford Canning brought

this violation of the treaty of Vienna before the house on the eighteenth of March, in a very able speech, explaining the relations in which the republic stood to her three protectors, so called, as well as to the rest of Europe; and skilfully exposing the designs of those protectors against its independence. In conclusion he observed that it was impossible to resist a disposition to inquire whether there were none of our own countrymen among the victims to be sent off to America,—whether there were not among the number those who had claims, not merely on our feeling, but on our sense of duty and justice? Moreover there was reason to believe, that a secret engagement had been entered into by these three great powers, as far back as 1833, for the military occupation of this territory: thus the arrangement seemed to have been of long standing; yet no communication whatever had been made to any foreign government.

Lord Palmerston found himself (as was naturally to be expected) embarrassed in consequence of neither the fact of this military occupation of Cracow, nor its causes, having been communicated to him officially by the three powers;³ all his information being derived from our ministers abroad, and the notices which had appeared in the different journals of Europe: he confessed that this harsh and unjust measure was a violation of the treaty of Vienna; though he concluded with a sympathizing feeling and courtly adulation toward these imperial and royal despots; with which the vehement and indignant denunciations of Mr. O'Connell, who most unceremoniously, but justly, denominated them as 'land pirates,' and 'crowned robbers,' who, in violating the neutrality and independence of Cracow, had treated England and France with contumely, formed a curious contrast. Lord John Russell's veneration for crowned heads led him also to think that high language on such an occasion was an unwise thing;⁴ and he could not argue that it would be proper to come to any strong resolutions on the question, even when they knew more about it than they did now; unless indeed we were prepared

³ Of course the housebreaker does not willingly alarm the inmates of the devoted mansion; nor does the plunderer of a sheep-fold, of his own accord, rouse the sleeping watch-dogs.

⁴ High language in a British house of commons, an unwise thing on such an occasion! and this from a member of the house of Russell! Why, where else are perfidious despots to hear the voice of truth? Since this time, however, the Russian autocrat has been designated in that assembly, amid the loud acclamations of free men, by a style still less palatable to his lordship's taste.

to support it by means of force; more especially as the honor of Great Britain was not committed in the transaction. This last expression called up lord Dudley Stuart, the noble defender of outraged Poland and the protector of her banished sons, to protest that the honor of Great Britain *had been* violated. 'Was it no affront for these three powers to tell a great country like this, that the treaty which settled the condition of all European nations, and to which we were a party, should be violated and infringed at their pleasure? Was it no attack on our honor, or a thing which we ought not to resent, to be told that this treaty had been torn to pieces, and trodden under foot, by arrogant northern courts? Such a violation of the neutrality of Cracow had inflicted a serious blow on our national reputation, and on the security of every country in Europe.' Thus ended our national dirge over the last act, but one, in the bloody tragedy of Poland. Its oppressors had abided their time; nor did they strike the blow until they knew that England and France were too much occupied with their own domestic concerns to interfere with their designs. They well knew also what a damper even to the expression of generous feelings is a national debt of eight hundred millions; and as to France, they knew that never since the days of Napoleon had she possessed, nor was she likely to possess, a government capable of forming a single great idea; much less a generous one: they saw that she had already commenced her petty vexatious intrigues in every court or territory upon earth, into which one of her envoys could creep; fomenting on all sides little plots, and fancying that she could set the world on fire with a box of lucifer matches.⁵

On the nineteenth of February a lengthened discussion took place regarding the dangers to which Europe itself was exposed from the growing power and systematic encroachments of Russia; more particularly as appeared in the late treaty of Unkiar Skelessi; which augured a dismemberment of the Turkish empire. The subject created considerable interest at the time; but that interest has gradually subsided, together

⁵ Would it were otherwise! for let me not be considered as disposed to condemn the power and spirit of France; or as not desiring to see as close an alliance as possible between her and this country, to the glory of them both, and to the advantage of the world. I only feel indignation at the mean policy and petty jealousies of her monarchs and statesmen, which are the greatest obstacle to such an union.

with the danger; a danger which is ready to vanish even before a friendly coalition between France and England—and how much sooner before the gigantic march of the iron and steam powers!

Many of our warm-hearted members, and among them several who entertained the most liberal and even radical opinions, anxiously endeavored to obtain from the commons an address to his majesty, to use his good offices with the king of the French for the liberation of the ex-ministers of Charles X.; imprisoned in the fortress of Ham: but the house, whilst it did justice to the motives in which this proposition originated, and agreed that such a measure would be most becoming to France, opposed itself to the address, as an unjustifiable interference in the domestic affairs of another country, which might even tend to prevent the good which it desired to accomplish.

A long discussion also took place on the affairs of Greece; whose revenue had not yet equalled its expenditure; and whose government therefore was anxious to obtain a third instalment of the loan guaranteed by the three powers; and which Russia, doubtless for political reasons of her own, was not willing to advance. Lord Palmerston therefore moved for a bill to enable England and France to act separately from Russia on this point; and even for England to advance her own *quota*, without the concurrence of the other two powers; the passing of which bill was one of the last measures of this busy session, which the king closed in person on the thirtieth of August.

In his speech on the above occasion, his majesty alluded to the existing tranquillity, and decrease of crime in Ireland; but in fact this portion of our empire had seldom been in a more turbulent state; for its agitators were again at work, forming societies and combinations, and exciting the angry passions of all classes; among whom the question of municipal reform was thrown as an additional stimulus. The condition of the clergy, this year, regarding their tithes, had considerably improved: for at the end of 1835, a lay association had been formed, for the purpose of enabling them to enforce their rights by such means as the law afforded; and thus a legal process of the court of exchequer was put in motion, far more effective than that open force which had hitherto been their only, and sometimes unhappy resource, on account of the great obstacles opposed to the serving a process on defaulters. The wrath, to which the leaders of the popish party were excited by any apparent possibility of enforcing payment of tithe, was aggra-

vated by the refusal of the lords to create, by passing the Irish municipal bill, a mass of papistical corporations; which would soon have become powerful instruments in the hands of agitators to destroy the protestant establishment: hence the celebrated letter of Mr. O'Connell 'To the People of England;' the object of which was to rouse them to show gratitude to Ireland, for the aid she had lent them in carrying the reform act, by destroying the character and rights of the house of peers. This epistle, however, produced an effect contrary to the expectations of its writer; who was driven back on his own resources of agitation in Ireland: where, with the assistance of his friend Mr. Sheil and the popish priests, he organised the 'General National Association,' on the model, and with all the machinery, of its catholic predecessor; including a general subscription, to be called the 'justice-rent.' This association was to meet once a week in the Corn Exchange; its declared objects being the abolition of tithes (such abolition to be accepted by instalments), and the carrying out of the act for reform in Irish municipal corporations. A project also announced by ministers regarding the introduction of poor-laws into Ireland occupied much attention in this new association; where a popular measure, introduced by father O'Malley for transferring tithes from the clergy, to commissioners appointed for the relief of the poor, was strongly opposed by Mr. O'Connell, who could bear no rival near the throne.

Thus stood affairs in our sister kingdom; nor did those of our most important colony in the west exhibit a more cheerful aspect. In Lower Canada, the disputes between the executive and one branch of the legislature still continued, and threatened to extend themselves to the upper province; when sir F. Head, its new governor, arrived at Toronto on the twenty-third of January, and opened the session of the colonial parliament on the twenty-seventh. He then declared, that the principle of his policy would be to listen to, and redress, every real and practical grievance, while he avoided every attempt at conciliating particular parties; that he had no promises or professions to make, but trusted that he should not call on them in vain for the assistance which government expected, and the country's interests required. On the thirtieth, he communicated to the house his public instructions; in which it was declared, that an elective legislative council would not be granted; and that what were called the crown reserves would not be abandoned, except an adequate and permanent civil list were voted. These however, and especially the first, were the very points insisted

on by the reformers in both provinces; who in both formed a majority of each house of assembly: instead therefore of proceeding to substantial business, that house, on the fifth, presented an address, earnestly calling for a multitude of papers and explanations, regarding past matters or individual transactions; and instead of responding kindly to an appeal made by the governor 'to their liberality and good sense'—whether as he had come a perfect stranger to their political differences, with instructions to correct all real grievances, while he maintained the constitution inviolate, it would not be better that he and they should look steadily forward to the future improvement and prosperity of the province, rather than occupy themselves with past transactions—the house of assembly expressed a dissenting opinion, and returned to their primary sources of agitation; when a new source of confusion was soon added to the old. In the Canadas the governor is assisted by an executive council, sworn to give him their best advice in matters that may come before them; and as one of the complaints of the reformers was, that the members of their party were excluded from such council, sir Francis, though he had declared his resolution of attempting to conciliate no party, attempted to conciliate this by the appointment of three new popular members. In consequence, within three weeks there was a schism between the governor and his council; which latter made very extraordinary demands, rejected all his explanations, and after his refusal to permit them to appeal, and make themselves responsible to, the people, tendered their resignation; which was accepted, and a new council nominated.

The whole body of reformers was immediately in commotion: violent addresses were voted to the governor; and on the fourteenth of March the house of assembly, which contained a majority of reformers, took up the matter, by voting an address to his excellency; which led to much angry feeling, to a stoppage of supplies, and to a prorogation on the twentieth of April: on the twenty-eighth of May the legislature was dissolved by proclamation, and a new election ordered; the writs to be returnable on the sixteenth of July. Sir Francis, as it appeared, did not take this step without knowing his ground; for he was clearly right regarding the powers claimed by the council; and the violence of the house of assembly produced a reaction in the province; which, added to the evils caused to the public service through the prorogation, sent a large majority of the new parliament wholly opposed

to the designs of the reformers, and thus restored harmony between the governor and the legislature.

Matters, however, did not by any means proceed so favorably in Lower Canada; where the demands of the radical party were still more extravagant, and had continued much longer to be the subject of open and violent discord. We have already seen what were their principal claims—viz., a complete change in the constitution, and an absolute control over all revenues arising within the state: in this latter they went so far as to require, that the charter of a British company, by which a large grant of land for the purposes of settlement had been obtained from the crown, for a valuable consideration, should immediately be annulled; and by way of enforcing their claims, they had refused to vote a civil list; leaving all public servants, even the judges, unpaid; while the party by whom they were supported, chiefly radicals of French origin, began to speak boldly of using force, and threatened a separation from the mother country.

When lord Gosford arrived in the colony, last year, he immediately excited suspicions and fears in the British party, by the close connection in which he seemed to place himself with the French radicals, and the manner in which he allowed himself to speak of their demands for reform; his great object being to obtain the necessary votes for his civil list, including arrears and repayment of money advanced by government. In his speech, at the opening of the session, he had told the house, that if they discharged the arrears due to public officers, and provided for their maintenance, no part of the surplus revenues of the crown would be touched, till the commission had brought its labors to an end: but the ruling party had as yet obtained only general and flattering assurances; and though they believed that his lordship had power, if not at once to concede the desired changes, yet to treat them as fair objects of inquiry, they had not been expressly told so: they therefore spent the session in passing bills relating to local matters, in providing for the payment of their own daily wages, and the salary of their parliamentary agent in London; but nothing could induce them to take up the subject of the civil list, which they put off to the very close of the session, when it would be better seen what they had to expect.

Under such circumstances, sir F. Head in Upper Canada, published his instructions; to which there was an appendix, containing extracts from those of lord Gosford; all proving that government had not determined to grant the principal

demands of the French party, particularly that relating to their reform of the legislative council; which his majesty was most unwilling should be made an open subject of debate. Hence their wrath was vehemently excited: they complained of studied insult; and voted an address to the king, on the twenty-sixth of February, in which they not only reiterated all their demands, but denied the power of our colonial office to limit the subjects that were to engage their attention; appealing from such infringement of the people's liberties to the supreme authority of the empire, and to his majesty sitting in his high court of parliament.

The crisis having thus arrived, lord Gosford, notwithstanding all his attempts at conciliation, was under the necessity of proroguing the legislature early in March; when he told its members, that, as they had refused to make provision for past years, or future expenditure, he would apply to these purposes, as well as to the current expenses of government, those revenues which were at the disposal of the crown: this their own obstinacy rendered imperative on him; and as all offers of peace and conciliation of which he was the bearer had been rejected, he would not venture to predict the consequences of this rejection, and of the demands which had been sent to his majesty.

In September, time having been taken to communicate with our colonial government, the legislature was again assembled; principally to give its members an opportunity of passing the necessary money votes, and receiving the answer of the British government to their late address. On the important subject of the legislative council, our colonial secretary acknowledged his own instructions to the governor, that his majesty was unwilling to admit the elective principle as matter of debate; but he added, that the commissioners had likewise been instructed to inquire how far the legislative council had really answered the purposes of its institution, and of what amendments it might be susceptible; also that government, when their report was received, would consider whether any alteration, 'founded on the principle, and conceived in the act, of 1791, would render the operation of that act more conformable to the intention of its framers; its principle being, as he conceived, that there should be two distinct and independent houses of legislature. Adhering to this it would remain with the commissioners to inquire, how the most effectual means could be taken for securing such a legislative council, as might at once enjoy a due share of public confidence; and the full

exercise of an enlightened independent judgment on all matters submitted to its consideration.'

All however was of no avail: the assembly voted an address to an answer to the message communicating this dispatch; in which they repeated their former demands, reproaches, and complaints; adding to them, the use of the government revenues made by the executive since the termination of the former session; and declaring their renewed resolution to grant no farther supplies: nay, they had proceeded to a certain length with a bill of their own, for making the legislative council elective, when the session was closed by his excellency on the fourth of October. At this time Jamaica also was the scene of similar disputes between its executive and legislature; although here they regarded particular legislative measures, rather than any proposed alterations in the existing constitution. Our colonial government decided in this case, that lord Sligo had unequivocally committed a breach of privilege; and he was either recalled, or permitted to resign. In fact he ought never to have been sent to so important a post.

France this year settled her disputes with the United States; but was unable to effect the conversion of her five per cent. stock: hence the resignation of her cabinet, and the formation of a new one, under that firebrand of ministers M. Thiers. The trial and execution of Fieschi and his accomplices, for the attempted murder of the king, took place; but did not prevent other attempts, the same year, from being made against what appeared to be a charmed life. A wise and important resolution was taken by the French government to abolish licensed gaming houses, those fruitful sources of demoralisation and misery; but nothing could induce the chambers to relax that system of commercial legislation, to which they continue so devotedly attached, and which fetters commerce by protective duties, almost amounting to prohibitions.

Spain was still drenched with the blood of her sons; and atrocities, such as nowhere else are heard of, continued to be committed: several of these have already been alluded to; the rest would require a volume for their recital. This year, however, great disturbances took place at Madrid; when the queen regent was compelled by force to proclaim the constitution of 1812.

In Portugal, the year opened with the second marriage of the young queen. She had become a widow in March preceding; and the Cortes lost no time in presenting an address, praying her majesty, for the good of the nation, to select a

second husband; and before the end of the year a marriage treaty had been arranged with prince Ferdinand Augustus, of Saxe Coburg, another scion of a family marvellously successful in rising by matrimonial alliances. The finances of the nation continued in a most disordered state: riots occurred at Oporto; and a military insurrection at Lisbon; when this queen also was compelled to proclaim the democratic constitution of 1820; under which the commercial treaty which had so long existed between Portugal and Great Britain was allowed to terminate; and scandalous treatment of the British auxiliary troops took place; who were ejected from the country without receiving one farthing of arrears due to them for past services.

The points still in dispute between Holland and Belgium, chiefly regarded the union of Luxemburg with the latter country; and continued nearly in the same state as last year. In Holland the States-general were occupied with the amelioration of their criminal code, and the ordinary matters of finance, which were found prosperous enough to allow of some taxes to be reduced. In Belgium the principal occurrence of the year was the passing of an act to establish a municipal form of government in its towns and communes; the provisional government, called into existence by the late revolution, having made these local governments purely democratic and independent. The Germanic diet still watched vigilantly over the proceedings of hot-brained demagogues, who, under the affected title of 'Young Germany,' had become disseminators of the vilest principles in politics, morals, and religion: on the eighteenth of August resolutions were adopted, to prevent such offenders in one state from finding an asylum in another. In the present year also, the grand object after which Prussia had so long been laboring—to unite the German states in one body, by a commercial treaty, which should introduce into all the same scale of duties,—was accomplished; when the Zollverein received the adhesion of Nassau and the free city of Frankfort. Before this singularly wise and politic scheme was effected, every sovereign in Germany was accustomed to protect his territory against a neighbor, as if he had been an enemy; surrounding it by a cordon of custom-houses in lieu of fortresses. The other European affairs, which deserve notice, have been already touched on.

In North America, after the United States had settled their disputes with France, a large surplus remained in the treasury; and its disposal occasioned a strong party contest in congress. It was applicable to no specific purpose, and lay deposited by

the secretary of the treasury, in different state banks; general Jackson having succeeded in destroying the United States Bank, as a bank of the union, government wished to apply it to military purposes: but the opposition carried a motion for distributing among the state governments in proportion as each had contributed towards it. The ostensible reason of general Jackson's hostility to the United States Bank, was a wish to secure a currency in specie, and check the diffusion of mere paper credit: for the same purpose, several of the states had prohibited the circulation of small notes; and congress now prohibited such from being taken in payment on any public account. But instead of the wished for results being obtained, banking, and paper credit, and all the wild speculations which for a time attach themselves to it, increased to an extent which America had never known; and threatened consequences which very few European countries had ever felt: in truth, the womb of Time was big with events, which no one would have dared to predict. General Jackson's longest constitutional term of service having expired, the ministerial and successful candidate for his chair was the vice-president, Mr. Martin Van Buren.

In Mexico, Texas, the most northerly and fertile of its provinces, stretching along the shore of the Gulf, and extending to the confines of the territory of New Orleans, established its independence, after Santa Anna and the forces of the republic had been defeated with great slaughter. At the end of 1835 its inhabitants had raised the standard of revolt, under the pretence of defending their rights and liberties, and the republican principles of the federal constitutions of 1824: but the real instigators of the rebellion were persons belonging to the United States; and the true object was, the incorporation of this rich country as a member of the American union. The population of Texas contained many North American emigrants; its landholders were universally slave-holders: the Mexican government had abolished the slave-trade, and the Texians complained of unjust oppression, which drew to their side all the southern and slave-holding states, eager for the accession of a new and extensive territory of this kind to the union, in order to increase their influence in congress.

In the other provinces of South America *insurrection* was the order of the day; but their petty strifes are scarcely worthy of particular record.

No occurrences took place worthy of notice in our domestic affairs, if we except the death of that eminent judge, lord

Stowell, who had retired in 1828 from the court of admiralty, over which he had long presided with much honor to himself and advantage to his country; whilst his aged brother, lord Eldon, still survived, to feel his apprehensions gradually diminish regarding that act of reform, the prospect of which had been to him a source of long and excruciating anxiety.

Their majesties spent the early part of the year at Brighton, receiving many of their subjects with the rights of royal hospitality: the king was observed to be attentive to his health, though very sedulous in the discharge of his public duties. At a magnificent *fête* held in London, on account of the queen's birthday, the young princess Victoria paid a visit of congratulation to her majesty, in high health and spirits; being much admired for the elegance and simplicity of her manners.

Parties, at the commencement of 1837, remained much in the same state as in the preceding year; and the uses made of the reform bill, as well as the checks which the upper house was able to give to its impetuous movements, began to quiet the apprehensions of those who looked forward to revolution as its result: the lapse of two sessions was sufficient to cool the ardor of hope, as well as calm the agony of despair. This result was accelerated by the conduct of the radical party, who had enabled ministers to carry their favorite measure; and whose success prompted them to overrate the hold which they had on the opinions of the country at large, and to take up a high position as advocates of change; and by this they deprived the whigs of a large portion of that popularity which they had so hardly earned: nor did the avowal of their hopes and projects, which, in the conviction of their growing strength, the radicals did not hesitate to indulge, fail to alarm many who had supported the late change made in our constitution, only on the understanding that it was to be a final one, and who abhorred the periodical recurrence of popular tumult. We may add to this the natural lassitude which follows a high state of excitement; the disappointment of the masses, who expected that under the reform act the quartern loaf, and the quart of porter, would have fallen to a penny each; and more especially that good sense which lies at the bottom of the English character, and which always comes into action, sooner or later, when it is wanted. Hence we have a sufficient explanation of the different results of the general election which returned the first reformed parliament, and of that by which it was replaced, when sir R. Peel took the reins of government in hand. In fact, the influence of property, of old connexions,

and of early prejudices was beginning to resume its ancient sway: the new boroughs acted very much like the old ones; and little could thence be inferred as to the increased prevalence of revolutionary opinions in general. In parliament ministers had no reason to complain: they were greatly relieved from that pressure from without, which was always urging extreme measures, and which had driven lord Grey from his post: they had, much to their own comfort, exchanged a radical for a conservative opposition; and if their opponents were more formidable, their friends were less troublesome. The whigs were content with this state of things; for they are a body of men highly aristocratic in their opinions, and cannot be supposed indifferent to the stability of those institutions, on which their own importance and welfare depend; while the great mass of the nation at this period willingly left them in possession of power; lest, if they resumed their place as an opposition, they might gain that species of popularity which opposition generally holds; when the radicals being at liberty to resume the task of excitement, both might co-operate together with greater effect and bring the vessel of the state into great dangers. Such was the general state of public opinion regarding our domestic concerns; while the foreign relations of the country appeared as pacific as at any former period of our annals. It was evident that peace had now become the leading principle of European states—and this appeared evident enough from the impotency of revolutions and civil wars in particular states, to draw others into the vortex. Moreover it may be stated as a truism, that the longer peace shall last the longer is its continuance probable: so many and so vast are the connexions formed between different countries, and so anxious are commercial and monied men, the most powerful in all, to draw closer those connexions which guarantee to them the possession of their treasures. Add also to this the negative influence of national debts upon war, and the direct power which may be brought to bear upon it from the wondrous inventions of the age, and peace may now be considered as advancing to her ultimate triumph.

The assembling of parliament had been assigned to the last day of January; but the business of discussion anticipated its operations. Numerous meetings took place in the country, under the auspices of the several parties, to array their strength, and display their views, preparatory to the important struggle about to take place within the walls of St. Stephen's.

At the opening of this year the reformers of Bath gave a

dinner to their representative Mr. Roebuck, which included the leading radicals of the country, who took this opportunity to renew a public profession of their political faith; declaring their unconquerable hatred of tory principles; explaining their reasons for giving assistance to a whig government, which was yet unwilling to advocate truly liberal projects; and endeavoring to restore confidence to the more timid reformers, who desponded at the view of conservative forces, by reminding them of what they had been able to achieve under circumstances far more unfavourable,—when the aristocracy dictated to the intire legislature.

A meeting, still more imposing in numbers and circumstances, was a banquet given by the reformers of Middlesex, to their representatives Mr. Byng and Mr. Hume, in Drury-lane theatre; where tables for 1100 persons were laid out on the stage and a raised floor in the pit; the boxes being appropriated to spectators of the scene. Here Mr. Byng, the father of the whig party in the house, congratulated this assembly on the progress and diffusion of liberal principles which he had lived to see. Mr. Hume dwelt on the impolicy of leaving the army in the hands of their opponents. Mr. Grote required, that every member or supporter of government should be allowed to give his free suffrage on the question of the ballot: but all these gentlemen, together with Messrs. Warburton and Duncombe, deprecated as the consummation of calamity to the popular cause, a return of the tories to power: a party whose dominion rests on everything that is antiquated, corrupt, and anti-popular; on oligarchical predominance in the state, and sectarian pride and privileges in the church. Similar meetings were got up in other parts of the country, where similar sentiments were displayed; nevertheless it is true, that a reaction in favor of conservative principles had begun throughout the realm; the stream was turning; and strong indications of this change appeared at a very important meeting held in Glasgow, to honor sir R. Peel's election to the office of lord rector of its university, where sir John Campbell, the attorney-general, had been defeated. An immense number of his political friends and admirers met the right honorable baronet on this occasion, in an immense temporary saloon, where tables were laid out for nearly 3500 guests: among them were many who had supported the reform bill; a circumstance which was adverted to by sir Robert himself, as a matter of great satisfaction, when he addressed the assembly after dinner. 'I want not,' said he, 'to taunt

you with reaction or conversion ; but I say, that if you adhere in the principles which you professed in 1830, it is here you ought to come. You consented to a reform, invited by a speech from the throne, expressly on the condition, that it should be according to the acknowledged principles of the constitution. Let us have no mistake on that point : I see the necessity of widening the foundations on which the defence of our constitution and religious establishment must rest.' He then asked the reformers present, whether they adhered to the principle on which the bill was brought in ; that is, as an instrument for improving and preserving the settled institutions of Great Britain : and he contended that reformers should not leave to him, who was taunted with the appellation of a reformer, the defence of their own measure ; but should prove it to be, what they had contended it was, consistent with those principles. He agreed with them that the machine of government should not be allowed to stand still ; he wished to see it performing its proper and healthful office ; though he would not sanction a constant interference with its vital functions.

'But,' he continued, 'let us come to the main point ; for I do not wish to conciliate your confidence by hoisting false colors. My object is to support our national establishments, which connect protestantism with the state, in the three realms.' To this declaration the whole assembly, rising in one mass, responded with long and loud acclamations. 'Then again,' he went on to say, 'I avow to you that I mean to support in its full integrity the house of lords (here there was a similar outbreak of applause) as an essential, indispensable condition for maintaining the constitution under which we live : and if you assent to this opinion, the hour is arrived when we must all be prepared to act on the declaration of it. In conclusion, the new rector observed, that he had long fought the battles of the constitution ; but he never had despaired ; he had never doubted that the ancient hearts of England and Scotland would rally round the institutions of their common country. With what feelings of confidence then should he return to take his part in the same conflict ? The disturbing force of foreign example had diminished ; the dazzling illusions of the glorious days had passed away ; and the affections of the people were visibly gravitating again to their old centre, full of a respect for property, a love of national freedom, and an attachment to long-established institutions. From these walls he trusted a spirit would go forth, to animate the desponding, and encourage the timid. He looked abroad from

the spot on which he then stood, to the moral influence of that opinion which constituted the chief defence of nations; he looked to it for the maintenance of that system of government which protected the rich from spoliation, and the poor from oppression; he looked to that spirit which would range itself under no tawdry banner of revolution; but would unfurl and rally round the flag which had braved a 'thousand years the battle and the breeze.' Yes; he felt not a doubt that it would continue to float triumphantly; and that our constitution, tried as it had been in the storms of adversity, would come forth purified and fortified in the rooted convictions, feelings, and affections of a religious, moral, and patriotic people.' The manner in which these and other such remarks were received, tended to exhibit the sons of Caledonia firm as their rocks and mountains in the cause of the best constitution that has ever yet been devised for social happiness; and similar sentiments were now regaining strength throughout the empire.

Parliament met on the last day of January; the session being opened by commission. After the usual statements concerning our pacific relations with foreign powers, his majesty, by commissioners, lamented the state of civil war still existing in Spain; and alluded to the threatening aspect which affairs in Portugal had at one time taken; and which had induced him to order an augmentation of our naval force in the Tagus to protect the persons and property of British subjects.

He then called attention to the very important subject of the state of Canada, reports of which he had ordered to be laid before parliament. He also recommended to their serious deliberations the provisions which would be submitted to them for the improvement of the law and administration of justice; also such measures as might impart increased stability to our established church while they produced concord and good will.

He recommended more especially to the house of commons a renewal of their inquiries into the operation of the act for joint-stock banks; concluding with a reference to the state of Ireland, and to the wisdom of adopting all such measures as might improve that part of the united kingdom. With this view his majesty recommended to the early notice of parliament, the present constitution of the municipal corporations of that country; the collection of tithes; and the difficult, but pressing question, of establishing some legal provision for

the poor, guarded by prudent regulations, and such precautions against abuse, as experience might suggest.

The address in the lords, moved by the earl of Fingall, was seconded by lord Suffield; and both mover and seconder were careful not to go beyond the royal speech itself in topics or opinions; to which, the usual vagueness was communicated. The duke of Wellington admitted, that an address less liable to objection could hardly have been composed; but he protested strongly against the reasoning of the noble seconder, who seemed to think, that the existence and conduct of the Irish National Association was justified by the proceedings of that house. He did not call on government to interfere with the proceedings of such an association; but while he saw a body existing which formed committees, named agents, raised money, and appointed officers, he could hardly reconcile this with the tranquillity which had been talked of: and he asked whether it was another evidence of such tranquillity, that church property was all but annihilated; and that a clergyman could scarcely claim his dues without the certainty of being murdered.

His grace then alluded to the affairs of Spain; and to the quadruple treaty, of which he had never approved; though when in office he had considered it a duty to carry out its provisions. He thought that there should have been no interference in the internal affairs of Spain; and the notion of forcing any system of government on that country was wholly impracticable: to do so we must take both our own and the Spanish army into our pay; and this, he suspected, would not be very palatable to a house of commons, or a chamber of deputies. He deprecated any such attempt as injurious to Spain itself, where three several parties had already been ruined by our intervention.

In the commons the address, moved by Mr. Sandford, was seconded by Mr. Stuart Villiers; and the debate which followed was enlivened by Mr. Roebuck, who took occasion to inveigh strongly against the whole system of ministerial policy; but he met with little encouragement from the house, whose members in general differed with him in thinking the whigs worse than the tories, as well as in the necessity of the ballot and other organic changes.

Ireland continued to be this year, as it had been for many years, the cardinal point of our domestic politics: indeed, of late our parliamentary annals have been little more than attempts at ministering to her ailments, which result from the

misgovernment of centuries; and the release of our legislature from a constantly recurring discussion of Irish questions, would not be the least among the benefits attending any system which would permanently set them at rest. At this moment Irish politics had acquired more importance than ever; and it was by dint of political agitation that Mr. O'Connell was enabled to secure the return of that body of members, denominated 'the tail,' whose support was now the mainstay of ministers. A question affecting the Irish church was the means by which the whigs returned to power: and farther concession to the same party was naturally assumed to be the condition of their retaining it. Under these circumstances every effort was made to alarm and exasperate the protestant mind throughout the United Kingdom by pictures of the ruthless conduct of Romanists, especially of the catholic association, and the prospective ruin of our church establishment. Hence a great protestant demonstration was made this year, just before the assembling of parliament, at the Mansion House in Dublin; where it was calculated that 3500 persons were present, including about thirty noblemen, with a large body of landed proprietors and other influential persons. The sentiments of this assembly, as well as their apprehensions, were embodied in a petition to the house of lords, which was presented on the twenty-eighth of April by the marquis of Downshire; when it led to an able and interesting debate on the state of Ireland.

But on whichever side the grievances of that country preponderated, ministers lost no time in bringing its politics under the notice of parliament. On the seventh of February lord John Russell moved for leave to bring in a bill to amend the Irish municipal corporations; which differed from that of last year only on one material point—the power given to town councils of interfering in the appointment of sheriffs. Among the new topics introduced into the debates were a strong eulogy, by lord John Russell, on Mr. Fox's principle of governing Ireland, by concessions; and by pleasing the people; together with a labored defence of lord Mulgrave, who had fully and successfully administered his government on that principle. 'He has endeavored,' said his lordship, 'to carry into all legal and official details the spirit of impartial justice; in which he had been ably assisted by his chief secretary, his attorney and solicitor-general, each acting in complete accordance with himself: nor did he fail to notice lord Mulgrave's impartial selection of persons for government

officers, and stipendiary magistrates: with regard to the National Association, he contended that it was a mere result of the political state of the country; and asked, what concessions had ever been made to Ireland that did not seem at least the effect of fear?

His lordship was answered on these points at great length and with great ability by Mr. serjeant Jackson; who reiterated all the assertions of the Dublin meeting against the earl of Mulgrave; and especially reprobated the conduct of the late attorney-general, in giving orders that no juryman should be set aside; by which means it was impossible to obtain verdicts against men whose guilt was notorious. He strongly inculpated the recent appointment of Mr. Pigot, a Roman catholic, to the important office of legal adviser to the Irish executive; who though a gentleman of high legal talent and private respectability, was one of the most active members of that general association, which was nothing else than the old catholic association revived; revived too when the Orange societies had set so laudable an example of dissolution. He also strongly censured the viceroy's autumnal circuit of gaol delivery, in quest of popularity; when he set open the prison doors, and discharged prisoners, according to the extent of the county or the number of its inhabitants; and this, without any consultation with the judges, or reference to the circumstances of the case. Was this the way, he justly and indignantly asked, to insure confidence in the administration of the law? But when the learned serjeant inveighed with equal indignation against an invitation which Mr. O'Connell had received to dine with the lord lieutenant, he weakened the force, and tarnished the brilliancy, of his arguments, by imbuing them so strongly with party spirit: the charge had very little effect on the house; and indeed it would have been singular, if lord Mulgrave, who, as well as the rest of the administration owed so much to Mr. O'Connell's support, had not thought him worth the civility of an invitation to dinner. This attack drew down upon the learned serjeant no small share of abuse from the great agitator; who was followed by Mr. Shaw, whose invective called up Mr. Roebuck to lecture the house on the countenance which it seemed to be giving to this reciprocation of invective.

On the second night of the debate, Messrs. Lefroy and West, with much force and ability, recapitulated the arguments used against the Irish government and its ally Mr. O'Connell; when a case was cited by Mr. West, to the

effect, that proposals from a most respectable clergyman of the established church in Ireland, for a life insurance, had been refused by the directors of a company.

A detailed vindication of the noble viceroy's administration from so many allegations, was undertaken by lord Morpeth. Sir James Graham in reply adverted with much severity to the connexion of government with so dangerous an implement of democracy as the general association. 'One striking peculiarity of Ireland,' said the honorable baronet, 'is, that while the great mass of property belongs to protestants, the great bulk of the population is Roman catholic. Every concession hitherto made has failed; and the past I fear is, in this respect, only a pledge for the future. Believing that any increase of the democratic power would be dangerous to protestantism in Ireland, I am prepared to take my stand, and to resist, not only the abolition of exclusively protestant corporations, but the erection of new ones, intended to be no more nor less than so many catholic fortresses to assist in a warfare against the protestant establishment.'

In reply, sir J. C. Hobhouse referred to, and repeated lord John Russell's intimation, that the fate of this measure would decide that of the cabinet; and he then asked, of the powerful party opposite, if they should succeed in obtaining office, on what principle they expected to govern Ireland? By Orange neckerchiefs and Orange acclamations? or by a majority in the lords against a majority in the house of commons? a house assembled under sir R. Peel's own auspices, and which had already supported this measure by a majority of 86?

Sir Robert Peel denied the right of any one to catechise him on the results of a contingency which, till that night, he had thought most remote. One-half of sir John's speech had been a doleful lamentation of the inability of ministers to carry on the present government. As for lord John Russell's exposition of its Irish policy, it reminded him of the performance of the play, in which the two characters of Hamlet and Ophelia are omitted: it contained not one word of reference to the two great questions which concern that country—tithes and poor-laws: but we are told that because we refuse to apply the same principle to Ireland as to England, respecting municipal institutions, we are both wronging and insulting the Irish people. 'Let me then ask (said he) do you intend to apply that rule to the other measures? to the church, and to the poor-laws? I know that many have

clamored for identity of legislation, and assailed us with the charge of insult, who have shrunk from it when these interests came into consideration: nor was it any more of an insult to Irishmen to refuse them certain municipal institutions, than it would be to reject a measure for erecting Birmingham and Manchester into corporate towns.'

In his concluding reply lord John Russell said, he had not thought it desirable to mix up the questions of the church and poor-laws with that of corporation reform. It was certainly his wish to support the church of Ireland; and he greatly deplored the sufferings of its clergy; but the danger imminent over that establishment came from sir Robert Peel and his friends. He firmly believed, that if the bill of 1834 had been accepted, they would have obtained a better guarantee for its security than was probably now in their power.

The motion, which was merely one for leave to bring in the bill, was not opposed; consequently the two parties had no opportunity of trying their strength in a division, though each successfully enough pointed out the difficulties attaching themselves to the governing principles of its antagonists. Both at this time, and for many years afterwards, the church and its tithes, the want of proper poor-laws, the temper of the inhabitants, the hostility of the priests, the agitation of Mr. O'Connell, and any cause but the true one, has been assigned for the disturbed state of Ireland and the wretched condition of its people, who sow and reap for others what they may not touch themselves; and who are driven by destitution to the commission of outrages which prevent the introduction of that capital among them, which by employing their hands and filling their stomachs, would render them as peaceable as any subjects in her majesty's dominions. It is the *tenure of land* in that unfortunate, confiscated country, which lies at the root of the evil.

On the twentieth of February, the bill which gave cause to the debates above recited, was introduced into the house of commons by that accomplished and patriotic nobleman lord Francis Egerton; when it created long debates, intermingled with many personalities: among these was a lively and effective sally made by Mr. Sheil against lord Lyndhurst (who happened at the very time to be sitting under the gallery) in return for his unfortunate application of the term *aliens* to the catholic population of Ireland. 'It was an obnoxious expression, which had never been disavowed; and even sir Robert Peel, though he would not adopt, dared not disap-

prove of it. He was only surprised, that the duke of Wellington, when he heard it, had not started up and said, those aliens had done their duty. The duke,' said Mr. Sheil, 'is not a man of sudden emotions; but he ought not to have forgotten Vimiera and Badajos, Salamanca and Toulouse, or the last glorious conflict which crowned all his former victories. On that day—when the destinies of mankind were trembling in the balance, when batteries spread slaughter over the field, and the legions of France rushed again and again to the conflict,—on that day did the *aliens* flinch? No; on that day the blood of the men of England, Ireland, and Scotland, was poured out together: they fought in the same field—they died the same death—they were stretched in the same pit—their dust was commingled—the same dew of Heaven fell on the earth which covered them—the same grass sprung from the soil in which they reposed side by side: and is it to be endured, that we should be called *aliens* and strangers to that empire for which our best blood was shed?'

This appeal, which elicited enthusiastic cheers, called up sir Robert Peel, who deprecated such methods of catching at any hasty phrase, dropped in the heat of debate, and making it a matter of history. He asked, for instance, whether Mr. Sheil had ever heard of an Irishman, who thought so little of his country's glory as to frame no better appellation for the duke of Wellington, than that of 'a stunted corporal?' Sir Robert then went into an argument against the bill under consideration; which finally passed the commons by 302 votes against 247.

On the thirteenth of April, it was introduced into the upper house by lord Melbourne; who moved that the second reading be fixed for the twenty-fifth of the same month; and on the day previous, a meeting of the conservative peers is said to have taken place at Apsley-house, for the purpose of considering the best method of dealing with it. A strong party were for throwing it out at once; but the duke's opinion, that it should be allowed to go into committee, prevailed; and, when asked, what he would do with it when there, he is said to have replied in his own laconic manner, —'it would be time enough to think of that when it was there.'

In moving the second reading of the bill, lord Melbourne expatiated much on the good effects resulting from a similar measure in England; adding many other arguments for inducing the house to concede to Ireland what was but little

to give, though much to withhold; and asking whether we were prepared always to govern that country in a manner hostile to the feelings of the great mass of its inhabitants?

The duke of Wellington was ready to agree to the second reading of the bill, on an understanding that existing corporations ought not to be continued; but he would not pledge himself to various details of the present measure, against which he felt strong objections: these, however, he would endeavor to remove in committee: but he could not suppress his astonishment that lord Melbourne should have determined to bring again before the house, a measure which it had rejected last session; not anticipating the ready reply which his lordship did not fail to use, when he observed, 'that the case was far from a singular one: for there was a bill against which the noble duke himself always divided; but which he was the very man to introduce and to carry.' Lord Brougham would have hailed the consent of the duke and his ally lord Lyndhurst, to the second reading of this bill, could he have believed it to proceed from any change of opinion, rather than from a wish of unprofitable delay; but on the fifth of May, when the order of the day was read for the house to resolve itself into committee on the bill, his grace rose, and moved to refer its committal to the ninth of June; being anxious to see the result of deliberations in the other house on the pending measures of Irish tithes and poor-law. On a division, there was found a majority of 77 votes in favor of this postponement; which gave Mr. Hume occasion to say in the lower house, which was then in a committee of supply, that there seemed to be no chance of agreement between the two houses; and that as the lords chose to stop all reform, the commons would do well to stop all supplies: accordingly he moved that the chairman do report progress, and ask leave to sit again; when, if this were agreed to, he should propose that the chairman do sit again on the ninth of June. This motion was received with cheers from his own side of the house; but on the chancellor of the exchequer's remonstrance, that the money was really wanted, to discharge the obligations of the state, Mr. Hume consented to withdraw it.

Although the postponement thus carried was for more than a month, there appeared to be so little probability that either the tithe or poor-law bill would come before the peers by that period, that lord Lyndhurst moved for a further postponement to the third of July; carrying his motion against the immediate consideration of the bill, by a majority of 86 votes.

As the chief malady of Ireland is the destitute and degraded condition of the great mass of its inhabitants, how to deal with a radical evil of such magnitude, was a problem of immense difficulty. One thing, however, seemed clear—that before anything was attempted affecting the habits of the people, their confidence in the good intentions of the legislature ought to be conciliated, by something offered in the shape of a positive benefit: a provision therefore for the destitute poor seemed necessary, not merely as called for by their actual sufferings, but as a ground for the introduction of other measures of a less palatable character.

The chief objection to this scheme lay in the abuses and embarrassments which had arisen out of a similar system in England: this difficulty, however, was in a great degree removed by the apparent success of changes lately introduced into our poor-laws; and men of almost all parties were now eager in their desire to see the system extended to Ireland, with modifications necessary to adapt it to the peculiar circumstances of that country.

A board of commissioners had been for some time busied with the consideration of this subject at Dublin, and had made a report which was very unfavorably received by government; who next sent Mr. Nicholls, a clever confidential agent, to prosecute inquiries by personal investigation; and this gentleman in six weeks found sufficient facts and grounds for a very able report, which he sent in on the twelfth of November.

Hence it appeared that Ireland, notwithstanding all her sufferings, was decidedly an improving country in respect of production. Evidence of increased wealth appeared everywhere; especially in the towns: but though capital increased, population increased still faster; and the great mass of the people remained poor. The extreme subdivision of land tended greatly to this result; for the soil, fertile as it is, had become exhausted by incessant cropping; and except in the grazing districts, farms of above one hundred acres had disappeared. There being no legal provision for the destitute, and the subdivision of land having destroyed all regular demand for labor, a piece of ground was the only source of subsistence to the peasantry: hence the violence with which they resist dispossession; since land on which they can raise a few potatoes is to them a necessary of life.

Mendicancy, it went on to say, had become universal, and therefore no longer disgraceful; drunkenness from the use of whiskey and tobacco was increasing; self-respect was almost

destroyed ; and while desultory and idle habits distinguished the men, the heaviest part of life's drudgery devolved on the women.

The chief objection urged against the introduction of a legal system of relief in this country, was its probable charge : it was said, that it would lead to universal pauperism and a consequent confiscation of property : such a difficulty was to be obviated by making actual destitution the sole ground of relief, and providing an adequate test of its reality. At this time no test of destitution existed ; for mendicancy was only an outward sign of it—but it was a heavy and unequal charge on the country : the great burthen of relief fell on the poorer classes ; the higher generally, and the absentee landlords intirely, escaped from it. The people were aware of this ; and were anxious for the introduction of a system of poor-laws, similar to those lately amended by the British legislature.

Such a system, however, it was observed, should not be expected to work miracles : it would not immediately give employment or capital ; but it might serve to help the country through a season of change, from the system of small holdings, to that of dependence on daily labor for support ; of all changes the most desirable. Moreover a legal provision for the poor, seemed an indispensable preliminary to the suppression of mendicancy : above all, the great requisite was a feeling of security ; such as would invite capital and by it give employment ; without which no security of person or property can exist.

With respect to the particular question of how far an introduction of the English poor-law was practicable in Ireland ; two difficulties presented themselves : first, whether the work-house system could be relied on as a test of destitution ; and secondly, whether means and machinery existed for the formation of unions : these questions, and especially the law of settlement, were treated by Mr. Nicholls with great ability ; and it was his opinion that emigration should not be looked to as an ordinary resource ; the necessity for its adoption being regarded as an indication of disease, which it would be better to prevent than thus to remove. In conclusion he came to a consideration of the nature and appointment of the 'central authority,' on which the whole administration of the new system was to depend ; and he strongly recommended this to be delegated to the English board, so as to preserve a unity of design and management.

On the thirteenth of February lord John Russell brought

this important subject before the commons, pressing it on their early attention, and laying before them the very able statement of Mr. Nicholls, whence he drew the principal arguments of his speech on this occasion; when the Irish members, of all parties, generally expressed satisfaction at the proposal; but Mr. O'Connell, though he did not actually oppose it, was much less sanguine than others respecting its beneficial results. The hundred workhouses proposed, he said, would afford shelter and relief to 80,000 persons: but what proportion was this to the mass of destitution in Ireland? He objected also to the *gradual* introduction of the measure, creating a state of transition, during which neither relief nor charity would be afforded to the suffering people; while relief in one district would instantly put in motion the destitution all around it. He disapproved, too, of that part of the plan which confined relief and employment to the unions, feeding men in idleness! He had also recommended to government an extensive plan of emigration, which he could not give up.

Sir Robert Peel was disposed cordially to support this proposal in its general objects; and lord Stanley, himself an Irish landlord, spoke still more strongly in its favor: but the second reading of the bill did not come on till the end of April; and the interval appeared only to have confirmed Mr. O'Connell in his hostility to all its provisions. On that occasion he attacked the measure in an able and forcible speech, though he repeated his intention of not directly opposing it; but he deliberately thought that it would aggravate, rather than mitigate the existing evils of the Irish peasantry. Of those evils he drew a very distressing picture; and then made a strong apostrophe to England as their author; to whose ancient spoliation of his unhappy country many of them, it must be confessed, are attributable. Numerous speakers followed; and every one had his criticism to offer on the details of this measure. Mr. Pryme was one of the few who objected to its principle in the abstract, which merely diverted money perniciously from one channel into another. 'If you levy,' said he, 'a hundred pounds, you take it from the employment of productive labor, and place it to the relief of unemployed poor: the Irish are suffering from want of employment; supply that, and there will be no surplus of labor in the market.'

Both sir Robert Peel and lord John Russell contended in reply, that a poor-law was not a general means for providing employment; though it was a mistaken notion of its proper functions in that respect, which led to the chief abuses of the

system in England: its object was merely to relieve the absolutely destitute, who might otherwise be left to starve; whilst it gave a right to magistrates to suppress vagrancy and imposture.

On the twelfth of May, when the order of the day was read for the house to go into committee, Mr. Lucas moved, 'that it be an instruction to the committee to introduce a provision for settlement so as more closely to apportion the pecuniary charges to be incurred and levied under the name of poor-rates.' But it is scarcely necessary to follow this bill any farther; as in consequence of the demise of the crown it never advanced beyond this stage of its progress.

On the first of May, the house of commons went into committee for considering that part of his majesty's speech which related to Irish tithes; when lord Morpeth observed, that this was the fifth measure which had been brought forward within the last three years, for the adjustment of that question: his plan was shortly this—to deduct thirty per cent. from the tithe composition so as to make a rent-charge on the first estate of inheritance, in the proportion of £70 for every £100 of tithe. By the bill of last year, power was given to the commissioners of woods and forests to collect the rent-charge; but this appeared to make the clergy too dependent on government; and they were now to be allowed to collect it for themselves. The provisions of former bills for the revising or re-opening of compositions, would be reserved: with respect to the regulation of the incomes of benefices, he would adopt the scale recommended by lord Stanley, last session; with the exception of the *minimum* of £300, which was then taken as the lowest point of reduction to which the clerical income should be liable.

The most novel part of lord Morpeth's bill was the provision by which he proposed to apply a portion of the clerical income to the purposes of general education; and he showed by a statute (fifteenth of the twenty-eighth of Henry VIII.), that every incumbent of a parish was bound to keep, or cause to be kept, a school, in which English should be taught—an oath for its observance to be taken in all cases before institution—with heavy penalties both against bishops and clergymen for its infraction.

When this bill came to be discussed, at its second reading, it was strenuously opposed by Mr. Sharman Crawford, as wholly inadequate to the expectations of the Irish people; who would be satisfied with nothing less than a complete

release from every assessment for the support of the established church: it was also opposed by Mr. D. Browne, and lord Stanley; by the former on the principle of Mr. Crawford, but by the latter on one diametrically opposite; as he was wholly averse to the system of appropriation. Lord Morpeth and lord John Russell defended the measure, after adverting to the difficulty felt by government in steering between the opposition of contending parties; but this difficulty also was obviated for a time by the cause alluded to in the previous debate.

Among the leading topics of protestant discontent in Ireland, is the new system of national schools, introduced under the auspices of the whig government; ministers this session anticipated those attacks which they usually experienced on the subject, by bringing forward an early motion for inquiring fully into the whole of it. On this occasion the premier reminded their lordships, that the Kildare society had been in operation from the beginning of the century; but the discontent to which its system gave rise, among a large class of the Irish population, induced the king's ministers, very soon after their accession to office, to effect an intire change of plan. This was in 1831; when a board of commissioners was appointed to carry the new system into operation: much and continued dissatisfaction however had been expressed with it by a powerful party; five years had elapsed since its institution; and the commissioners had now presented their reports, as materials whence a just opinion upon the subject might be formed. He therefore moved, that a select committee be appointed for that purpose.

The bishop of Exeter availed himself of this opportunity to deliver a detailed statement of all the grievances which the adversaries of the commissioners were in the habit of alleging against them; animadverting severely on the virulence of the Roman hierarchy and priesthood against protestantism, and the discrepancy between the oaths taken by catholic members of the legislature, and their support of measures calculated to subvert and destroy the established church: also on the encouragement given by the board to the perversion of Scripture, for popish purposes, by means of garbled extracts and unauthorised translations. His lordship was answered by the archbishop of Dublin and lord Plunkett.

Government had been for some time engaged in framing a scheme for the arrangement of church rates, on principles which they hoped would be satisfactory to the scruples of dissenters, as well as to the claims of our establishment; and

the third of March was the day fixed by the chancellor of the exchequer for his motion,—that the house of commons resolve itself into a committee on this subject; and the statement of his plan was looked forward to by all parties with much interest and curiosity. The speech of Mr. Spring Rice, on this occasion, occupied nearly three hours; when, after showing by a variety of details that the existing system, the grievances of which he placed in a strong light, could not be maintained, and proving that the voluntary system, as well as several others proposed, offered no solution of the difficulties, he stated his own; which was,—to take the whole property of bishops, deans, and chapters, out of the hands of those dignitaries, and vest them in a commission of eleven members; under whose improved system of management, putting an end to the present method of leasing church lands, he calculated that a sum not less than £255,000 a year might be recovered for public purposes. With a view, however, to protect the interest of lessees, they would not only be intitled to a right of pre-emption, but might renew at five per cent. under the improved value; with a farther power of purchasing the fee simple of church estates, subject to an increased rent, payable to the commissioners, and fluctuating with the price of corn: provision was also made for the usual payment of pew-rents; for debts already contracted by various parishes; visitation fees, &c.; whence a saving of nearly £180,000 a year might be expected.

Only a short and desultory conversation followed the announcement of this plan; but it was easy to conceive what would be the opinion entertained of it by the ecclesiastical body generally, and especially by that portion whose interests were particularly affected by its provisions.

Three days after Mr. Rice's statement, a meeting of fifteen bishops, being all that were then found in London, took place at Lambeth palace; when they came to an unanimous resolution condemnatory of the scheme; and on the same evening the archbishop expressed in the house of lords a strong feeling of dissent from a measure, unkind to the church, as well as mischievous in its effects; which took from the establishment property which had belonged to it from time immemorial, and appropriated it to purposes which had been otherwise provided for; which tended to render the dignitaries of the church mere annuitants dependent on a board of commissioners, and to deprive them of all influence and advantages annexed to the possession of land. Considering the violent changes that had

often occurred, his grace conceived that a conjuncture of affairs might arise, in which the whole property would be swept away at once.

This protest against so sweeping a proposition, and which was naturally to be expected from individuals whose interests were so seriously affected by it, aroused the indignation of lord Melbourne; who animadverted strongly on the undue haste and precipitancy of the primate; asking, whether he was not put forward on this occasion by those who had more guile, and entertained deeper designs, than himself; in order that his expressed opinions might influence those of individuals in another place. He deeply regretted the opposition which government was to expect, on this occasion, from the most reverend prelate and his brethren; but such opposition would not alter his course in regard to a measure, just in itself, advantageous to the church, and beneficial to the community at large. These observations of the premier laid him open to some very severe animadversions from the bishop of London: but however ministers might choose to consider such an expression of feeling unreasonable on the part of the hierarchy, the friends of the church did not rest contented with this protest against the principle and policy of the bill by which they were threatened. A general movement took place on the subject throughout the country; and so many petitions were got up, deprecating the scheme as unjust in itself, and uncalled for by any adequate necessity, that it is not unfair to consider the fact of so large a body desiring the continuance of a tax upon themselves, as a strong testimony to the general attachment of the nation to its church establishment.

On the thirteenth of March, the house went into a committee on Mr. Rice's resolutions; which were combated in a long speech by sir Robert Peel; who, after examining the financial part of the project, declared that nothing could be more unjust than the scheme of removing a charge from the whole rateable property of the country and placing it on that of the church: of the landed property of this kingdom, a small proportion only was held by the dissenters; yet, for the sake of satisfying so small a section of the community, the rest were to be relieved from an impost about which they made no complaint. He also contended, that, if by any plan of this kind, consistent with strict justice, a surplus could be raised from church revenues, a prior claim existed to the benefit of it, in the hundreds of poor livings which required augmentation, and of vast districts where new churches were wanted. Mr. Goul-

burn asserted that it had been a principle of law from the earliest times, that parishioners were bound to keep their churches in repair; and he would not burthen his conscience by helping to relieve them from that obligation. Sir William Follett considered that by the law of the land the parishioners could be compelled to make a rate for the purposes of church repairs; but the attorney-general differed from him on this point; though he allowed that the case was so in Scotland. Lord John Russell entered into a very able and elaborate defence of the ministerial plan, and concluded with a high eulogy on the dissenters, for their services in the cause of humanity and civil liberty. Many other speakers took part in these debates, which lasted three nights; among whom Mr. Gisborne and lord Stanley were remarked for their vivacity: the former designated the late meeting of the bishops as a mere cabal, contemptible as vile, for upsetting a liberal ministry by influencing a decision of that house: the latter put a very pertinent question, when he asked—to whom the surplus fund, which was expected to be realized from the new administration of church lands belonged? If to the church, then it was an abstraction of church property. If to the state, then the dissenters had an interest in it; and they would thus be contributing to our establishment, as much as if the money were paid out of the consolidated fund. When the committee divided on the question of taking the plan into consideration, there were found for the resolution 273, and against it 250; by which ministers soon perceived that it would be a failure.

About this time a political incident occurred, which derived considerable importance from the indication it afforded of the state of public opinion. The liberal party among the electors of Westminster had been for some time past dissatisfied with the inefficient state of the representation of their city; and not without reason: colonel Evans had now been absent two years in Spain; and his distinguished colleague, sir Francis Burdett, had scarcely given a vote in his place in parliament; pleading ill-health as an excuse, but being suspected of growing cold toward the cause of the 'movement.' Accordingly a meeting was called, and resolutions were passed; to which sir Francis responded, by addressing a letter to his constituents, declaring that he would at once apply for the Chiltern Hundreds, and then call on the Westminster electors to declare themselves for or against him. He should offer himself again for their suffrages, as a supporter of the laws and institutions of his country; but as a resolute opposer of all the new-fangled

notions, shallow doctrines, and crude projects now afloat; and he denied that he had changed his politics: rather they who had made this assertion had changed. The constitution had ever been the inscription on his banner; and under the same he called on the electors to struggle with him against 'an unnatural alliance; an odious, yet ludicrous, combination of Irish agitators, popish priests, and paid patriots, operating on a well-intentioned, as he believed, but a weak and vacillating administration.'

Here were undisguised indications of hostility toward the party with whom the honourable baronet had previously acted; and so it was understood. To secure his re-election, sir George Murray instantly gave up his own pretensions; and to oppose it, Mr. Leader vacated his seat at Bridgewater: the whigs and radicals were sanguine as to the success of their candidate; who himself possessed no doubt upon the subject: but it turned out that they had miscalculated their strength; for the electors of Westminster returned their old member by a majority of 515. As they could not disguise to themselves their complete defeat, their disappointment was extreme. Sir Francis had fought the battle on conservative principles; he made no reserve whatever of his antipathy to the present reformers; and indeed expressed a determined opposition, against fresh changes in our institutions. He exposed himself by this conduct to much obloquy, both in and out of parliament; but he seems to have been supported by conscious integrity, as well as by the example of many other whigs of the old school, who were anxious to rescue our glorious constitution from the hands of assassins.

In the ensuing debates on a second reading of the church-rates bill, sir Francis, on rising from the opposition side of the house, was greeted with vehement applause from his new friends, answered by cheers of a very different character from the benches which he had deserted. His speech was less remarkable for any force or novelty of argument against the measure, than for the vehemence with which he impugned both it and its authors: he expressed deep regret at finding himself compelled to act against his former associates: it was a great sacrifice; but his whole life had been one sacrifice for the good of his country. He was answered by Mr. Sheil, who spoke, however, of the nonorable baronet in terms of personal respect, likening him to 'a venerable relic of a temple dedicated to freedom, though ill-omened birds now built their nests and found shelter in that once noble edifice.'

The ministerial project received approval in a very acute

and ingenious speech from Mr. C. Buller; and was as strongly opposed by sir James Graham. An amendment moved by Mr. A. Johnston, a general supporter of ministers, being withdrawn, a division took place on the original resolution; when there appeared in favor of it 287 votes, and against in 282; leaving them in a majority so small as to seal the fate of the bill, which they did not attempt to urge farther in the house of commons.

Ministers, however, in abandoning the immediate prosecution of their measure for abolishing church-rates, were still disposed to follow up their inquiries into the present method of holding and leasing the ecclesiastical property of bishops and of chapters; with a view to ascertain the probable amount of increased value by improved management, with a due consideration of the interests both of the established church and the lessees of its property. On the thirteenth of June, lord John Russell moved a committee for this purpose; which was strongly opposed by Mr. Goulburn and the church party; while, on the part of the dissenters, Mr. D. W. Harvey expressed himself as little satisfied with his lordship's advocacy of their claims; for by his inquiries their relief from church-rates would probably be kept in abeyance for three or four years. He accordingly moved an amendment, which was seconded by colonel Thompson, 'that it is the opinion of this house, that after a fixed time all payment of church-rates should cease;' but only fifty-eight members could be found to vote in favor of his proposition, while 489 voted against it. When the house divided on the original motion, the votes in its favor were 319; against it 236: a third division also took place on an addition moved by Mr. Goulburn for appropriating an increased revenue, to religious instruction by ministers of the establishment; when the ministerial majority fell from 83 to 26; so that the general results of all the divisions on this subject gave much satisfaction to the friends of our established church.

After the demonstrations by radical politicians at different public meetings, it was to be expected that they would lose no time in making their threatened parliamentary movements: accordingly, within the first week of this session the notice-book of the house of commons announced various motions for 'organic changes,' as they were called, in our constitution. Mr. Grote gave notice of his annual proposition of 'vote by ballot;' sir William Molesworth of a committee on peerage reform; Mr. Tennyson D'Eyncourt promised to introduce a bill for the repeal of the septennial act; and Mr. Hume

another for extending the parliamentary franchise to every householder. Besides, a notice appeared from Mr. Duncombe for a motion to repeal the rate-paying clauses in the reform bill; from Mr. Ewart for an address to the crown to appoint a minister of education; while Mr. Roebuck announced a bill for the establishment of a system of national education, and Mr. Ewart for an abolition, in cases of intestacy, of the law of primogeniture. These and several other motions of a similar tendency affecting particularly the privileges of the peers, came to nothing; both parliament and the nation in general were beginning to assume a spirit very adverse to those who would have tampered with our constitution.

The great measure of the whigs, after the reform bill, was undoubtedly the act for amending our poor-laws; which indeed may be considered as consequent on the other; for it may be doubted if, under the old representative system, parliament would have felt itself strong enough in its hold on public opinion, to deal with a social disorder so inveterate as the ancient system; whose tendency was to absorb progressively, not only the resources of charity, but the funds of productive industry, and by the ruin of proprietors and capitalists to consummate the misery of the laboring classes themselves: nor, perhaps, could any party, but that which had habitually assumed to itself the advocacy of popular rights, have safely brought forward a measure so open to misrepresentation in its apparent interference with them; though its real tendency was to raise their sentiments, and better their condition. All great social changes, however beneficial in their consequences, involve much individual suffering: it was therefore no sufficient argument against the adoption of the new poor-law, that it could not be effected without entailing hardship on the generation that had been brought up under the old system; nevertheless this consideration certainly supplied urgent motives to the originators of the new system, for alleviating as much as possible the necessary pressure of the change; and if an exception to the rigid application of the new law, in favor of those who had married under the old one, had been made, such a provision could not have been at variance with the principles of justice; nor would it have been inconsistent with mercy, if the commissioners had relaxed a little their rigorous regulations respecting out-door relief, when various unions urged relaxation under circumstances of peculiar hardship. Such cases of individual suffering frequently occurring, and being advocated by the most powerful portion of the public

press, created strong feelings of ill-will against the law itself; although its beneficial effects were soon perceptible in the increased employment given to laborers, and a reduction of rates: it is not, however, in the nature of Englishmen to congratulate themselves on such relief, while there is reason to suppose it effected through the sufferings and privations of the poor. Strong opinions began to be formed on this point; and Mr. Walter, chief proprietor of the most influential of our journals, and a determined opponent of the new law, brought the whole subject in review before parliament, by a motion 'for the appointment of a select committee, to inquire into the operation of the poor-law amendment act, and to report their opinion to the house.' Lord John Russell objected, that such an inquiry, if it were not intended to propose a repeal of the whole act, would be vague and desultory; and he moved as an amendment, which he thought would better meet all the objects which the honorable gentleman had in view—'that a select committee be appointed to inquire into the administration of the relief of the poor, under the orders and regulations issued by the commissioners appointed under the provisions of the poor-law amendment act.' In his answer to the statements of cruelty, hardship, and bad arrangement, brought forward by the mover and seconder of the original question, lord John observed, that his only difficulty was, to compress within a moderate compass the voluminous mass of evidence with which he was furnished from persons of all classes, tending in the strongest manner to show the great advantages of the new system: as an example of this, he instanced the state of East Kent, formerly one of our most pauperised districts; where out of 160,000 inhabitants only fifty-five able-bodied laborers had been inmates of the union-house at one time. In the debates, however, which followed, it was argued, that a paucity of inmates in the union-house was no proof of the well working of the system, as regarded the poor: they might be enduring extreme misery, and yet prefer that lot to the treatment they were likely to receive in such a receptacle: everything, however, which could be alleged for or against the system was brought forward at this period, when lord John Russell's amendment was unanimously carried; Mr. Walter readily withdrawing his motion, on an assurance given him by the chancellor of the exchequer, that government had no intention, by proposing such an amendment, to exclude any topic of inquiry which was not directly opposed to the principle of the bill.

The committee began its inquiry immediately, and continued it almost daily ; but such was the minuteness of examination, the mass of conflicting evidence, and the consequent slowness of its progress, that on the sixteenth of June Mr. Walter signified his intention of withdrawing his attendance ; a resolution, he said, to which Mr. D. W. Harvey, who had been his strenuous colleague, had long come, as well as himself. The committee had as yet gone through only two cases which he had brought forward ; for as soon as he alleged any instance of cruelty or maladministration, he was overwhelmed by a host of poor-law commissioners, chairmen of boards, clerks, guardians, and relieving officers ; who poured in such a mass of general documents as it was difficult for him to estimate, or enter upon : in fact everything tended to justify his original dissatisfaction with the committee ; composed as it was of a majority of gentlemen opposed to its object, with two ministers, an ex-poor-law commissioner, and seven or eight chairmen of boards ; against several of whom he had received complaints. The committee however continued their labors to the prorogation of parliament ; about which time they made their report ; the result of their examinations proving to them that the introduction of the new law had effected a considerable improvement in the character and condition of our poor ; that its operation was satisfactory, and ought to be maintained : moreover that the administration of the system had been in the main judicious ; the boards of guardians appeared to be very attentive to their duties, and the authority of the commissioners, as far as they could judge, to be exercised with great discretion. In conclusion they recommended the resumption of this inquiry next session, and suggested certain important points as subjects for investigation.

Early this session the commissioners who had been appointed to inquire into the ground of complaints in Canada, laid their report before both houses ; and on the sixth of March lord John Russell brought the subject under consideration of the commons ; prefacing it with a very candid speech, highly conciliatory toward the agitators of that province : having stated the complaints that had been alleged, and the difficulties of the case, his lordship next proceeded to state his remedies. It was now four years and a half, since the judges had received their salaries : hence it was proposed to apply a certain portion of the Canadian revenue to such payments as in their rejected bill of supply of 1833 the assembly had, under certain conditions, agreed to : the total amount of these would be £148,000 ;

and in this they would be simply applying the revenue of the colony to the uses of the colony. It was next proposed to adopt a recommendation of the commissioners, in excluding judges from the legislative council; also to provide that in future the members of that body should not be so exclusively of English race; but alternatively one of British and one of French: with respect to the executive council, that there should not be more than two or three official persons in it; the others being selected by the legislative council and from the house of assembly: the privileges of the North American land company, as secured to them by act of parliament, would be maintained inviolate, a provision being made to prevent any abuse of them: as it seemed admitted that the complaints against the tenures act were in some respects well founded, that act would be repealed, the vested rights of individuals being respected. Whereas great complaints had been made of the obstructions thrown in the way of the commerce of Upper Canada by the lower province, which exacted heavy duties on the river, it was proposed that, with the assent of the two legislatures, a joint committee of twenty-four persons should sit at Montreal, with power to prepare laws and regulations on all matters of reciprocal intercourse.

These propositions were embodied in a series of ten resolutions; the first of which lord John moved for adoption, but they met with violent opposition from the radical section of his lordship's allies, especially from Mr. Leader, who designated the measure by the title of a coercion bill, and concluded with an amendment to the fourth resolution—'that it is advisable to make the legislative council of Lower Canada an elective body.'

It was observed by Mr. Robinson, 'that the whole of Mr. Leader's argument was founded on the very modest assumption, that the government, the commissioners, and the legislative council, had been decidedly wrong; while Mr. Papineau and the house of assembly were as uniformly right on all points: yet while they deprecated any violation of the act of 1791, they brought forward a proposition involving a very important deviation from its provisions. It was avowed by the organs of Mr. Papineau's faction, that the object of the French Canadians was to preverve what they called their nationality, even at the price of separation from this country; and that they especially sought to prevent the immigration of British settlers, which might destroy their preponderance. This was a course of policy not to be tolerated; for we looked

to our North American colonies as an outlet to our population and capital. Neither the Canadian, nor the British parliament, would be justified in stopping the supplies; except in an extreme case: that power was given them to guard their rights and privileges from invasion; not as a means of exacting changes in the constitution. With respect to the land company, any attempt to shake the principles on which it stood, would go far to affect all rights of property in the colony; the company had already produced great advantages, and would have effected many more but for the antiquated prejudices of the Canadians themselves.'

As might have been expected, Mr. O'Connell warmly advocated the cause of the Papineau party; which he strove to assimilate to that of Ireland; while he strenuously bawled out — 'justice to Canada' — 'give them an elective council, and the privileges of British subjects.'

Sir William Molesworth declared the case of Canada similar to that of Ireland; subjected as it was to the domination of a miserable monopolising minority, which arrogated superiority of place and treated the rest of its population as *aliens* in blood. Colonel Thompson urged the same topics: insisting also, that far from having any interest in coercing the Canadas, we should gain, in a commercial point of view, by getting rid of them. Mr. Roebuck followed with a long and virulent speech; in which, after giving an historical detail of the grievances of the Canadians, he asserted their right to exact what they desired; and the inability of Great Britain to prevent their obtaining it. He also dwelt much on the example of the American revolution; and on the sympathy and assistance they would receive from their friends in the United States, when the flag of independence should be raised; and this event he predicted as about to take place, whenever the resolutions of the noble lord should be agreed to.

An able reply was made to this diatribe by sir G. Grey, under-secretary for the colonies; who, having appealed to all the papers on the table, to all instructions sent out to a local government, and to every act carried out in pursuance of them, asked if anything had been done of which a free and independent people had the slightest reason to complain? Every grievance arising out of former misgovernment had been redressed to the utmost of our power; and now the house of assembly took up another ground, and declared, 'that if the constitution were not altered, they would stop the supplies:' this outcry was raised by the lower province only; Upper

Canada disclaimed any share in it. In the past year New Brunswick sent deputies to this country to ask concession, on all those points in which the people of Lower Canada were agreed: an arrangement was accordingly proposed in principle and details similar to those now offered to the Canadians, and was accepted with expressions of deep obligation to his majesty's government.

The adjourned debate was opened by a speech of three hours from Mr. Hume, remarkable for nothing but an unsatisfactory indication of a letter written by himself to the Canadians in 1834, strongly instigating them to rebellion; but which had been designated by the house of assembly in Upper Canada as 'a detestable communication;' and received by them with disgust and indignation. Many other speakers followed; but no one vindicated the rights and authority of the mother-country in a higher tone than lord Stanley, or exposed more forcibly the weak ground on which the colonists stood: for this speech he was thanked and congratulated by Mr. Leader, who predicted that it would have the same effect on the people of Canada, as that of lord Lyndhurst on the people of Ireland.

The three first declaratory resolutions were agreed to without a division: but, on the fourth being put, which included the impropriety of making the legislative council of Lower Canada an elective body, Mr. Leader proposed an amendment of a contrary tendency; when, on a division, there were found in favor of the original resolution 318 votes; and against it 56. After this decision ministers expressed a hope, that the opponents of the resolutions would not farther obstruct their progress; but delay was evidently the object of the Canadian party, in the expectation of getting up a demonstration of popular feeling on both sides of the St. Lawrence. Mr. Roebuck availed himself of allusions made to important information collected in this investigation, to demand, that the house should not proceed farther with the resolutions until this were printed; and after some resistance ministers were fain to consent to such an arrangement. The committee therefore was not resumed till the fourteenth of April, when the fifth resolution came under its consideration; and Mr. Roebuck, after predicting the utter loss of Canada, should the resolutions be carried, broached a plan of his own for the settlement of this dispute; the two principal features of which were,—first to abolish the legislative council, and transfer its powers to an executive council of twelve persons to be named by the governor; which might have the power to amend any measure sent

up by the assembly, but not to reject it, as that would rest with the governor only; and secondly to establish a general assembly of delegates from the houses of assembly in our various North American colonies, clothed with certain judicial and legislative powers to sit at Montreal.

Lord John Russell justly observed on this proposition, that whatever might be its merits, the proposer had no authority from the colony to make it; and, therefore, parliament could not take it as a basis of pacification: with regard to menaces of rebellion he treated them very lightly, and expressed his strong conviction that the Canadians would not find it their interest to place themselves under the banner of the United States: considerable discussion ensued on the right of control over waste lands; and Mr. C. Buller remarked, that the colony did not afford materials for an aristocracy, and therefore not for a legislative council: it might then be altered without affecting the dignity, or shaking the foundation of our house of lords. Mr. Roebuck spoke in reply, and very unjustly complained of lord John Russell, as doing all he could to insult and vilify the people of Canada; when his remarks called up sir Robert Peel, who spoke in a manner calculated to soothe the exasperated feelings of the provincials, while he supported the rights and authority of the parent state: the committee having divided on the fifth resolution, 269 votes were given for, and only 46 against it.

On the twenty-first of April, when the committee on the resolutions was resumed, Mr. Leader moved a postponement of their consideration, until it could be known whether the Canadians agreed, or not, to the plan recommended by Mr. Roebuck; and which that gentleman now endeavored to vindicate from the charge of absurdity with which it had been characterised by sir R. Peel. On a division, the postponement was rejected by 182 votes against 29: the house then went into committee on the sixth resolution, respecting the North American land company; and an amendment was moved by Mr. Roebuck, to defer all resolutions on the subject, 'until inquiry should be made respecting the circumstances under which the land held by that company had been obtained.' The company was ably defended by lord Stanley, Mr. Robinson, and sir George Grey; and on this occasion Mr. Grote, and others of the radical section, declined to support the amendment, which obtained only 6 votes against 166. Thus closed the discussion of this subject in the lower house; and on the first of May its resolutions were communicated to the house of

lords in a conference. On the ninth of the same month, lord Glenelg brought the subject under their consideration in a long speech; which, however, contained little that had not been dwelt on in the other house. He was supported by lord Ripon who hardly referred to the point on which he could have given most information—the unconditional surrender of the revenues in 1831; a measure for which he was responsible, and which was the immediate occasion of existing difficulties between Great Britain and her colony. The only opposition to the resolutions came from lord Brougham, who objected totally to their principles and policy: while he dwelt much on a violation of the Canadian constitution by the advance of monies without the consent of the house of assembly; yet, as lord Aberdeen observed, lord Brougham himself was at that time a member of the government by which such advance was made. The resolutions were agreed to without a division, lord Brougham alone saying ‘not content;’ and afterwards recording the grounds of his dissent in an elaborate protest, which he inscribed on the journals of the house.

Many other important subjects also engaged the attention of parliament during this busy session,—among which may be particularly mentioned the state of the banking system; in which the spirit of speculation last year, the multiplication of joint stock banks, and the excess of issues, had introduced much derangement, and created a crisis in the commercial world, which tasked to the utmost the prudence and management of the Bank of England to deal with it. In the preceding session, a select committee had been appointed to consider the state of the law on the important subject of joint stock banks; which found so much difficulty regarding them, that it contented itself with merely recommending a revival of the committee in the course of the following session. Accordingly, on the sixth of February, the chancellor of the exchequer made a motion to that effect, disclaiming any hostility to the system of joint stock banks, and proposing to extend the committee’s inquiries to Ireland. Mr. Hume, attributing the source of our difficulties to the Bank of England, which he contrasted very unfavorably with those of France and Holland, was anxious for the affairs of that establishment to be taken into consideration; and he moved an amendment, ‘that there be an inquiry into the state of banking, and the causes for the changes in our circulation since the year 1833.’ This amendment was supported by Mr. W. Williams; who considered that the bank had shown a reckless disregard of the interests

of the country : at this moment, instead of having, according to their own ideas of propriety, one-third of their issues in gold, they had only about one-seventh or one-eighth.

With respect to Mr. Hume's allusion to the seemingly superior stability of commercial credit in France, Mr. Robinson observed, that the fact admitted an easy solution. This country was the general mart of the world's commerce, where a large portion of the trade of Europe and America centered ; now there could be no doubt but that the late derangement of commercial interests in America had contributed to our difficulties ; while France, having had no share in these operations, had escaped all inconveniences resulting from them. Mr. Gisborne defended generally the conduct of our joint stock banks, attributing much blame to the proceedings of the national bank ; and Mr. Villiers supported the amendment for extended inquiry, which he hoped might lead to a discovery of the true principles on which banks should be established. Many other members spoke on this important question ; and when a division took place on the original motion, it was carried by 121 votes against 42.

Another emergency in which the Bank of England was called on to exercise the arduous and delicate office of interference for averting a convulsion of the commercial world, was occasioned by the crisis which took place this year in the American trade : a detail of circumstances leading to it is inconsistent with the limits of this work ; but they may be resolved into two leading facts ;—first, the overtrading spirit and rage for speculation which had prevailed during the last two years in the United States, conjointly with similar excitement in England : secondly, the sudden and extensive check which had been given to all operations in the American money market, through the measures adopted by president Jackson, hostile to the banking system of that country. There always has existed such intimate relations between the commercial interests of Great Britain and those of her ancient colonies beyond the Atlantic, that the least derangement of the affairs of either nation instantly and sensibly affects those of the other : but of late years these relations had become infinitely more complicated, by reason of America carrying on almost all her foreign trade, not merely with Great Britain, but with the east, and with South America, by credits obtained in England. The abuses to which such a system was liable were numerous and alarming : one only need be mentioned, which was not unusually resorted to. As the bills drawn were for four months, it

became easy for the less scrupulous American houses to pay off one credit before it was due, by obtaining a similar one on another house; and when once in the market, it was difficult to distinguish the paper thus obtained, from that which was issued on more regular and legitimate transactions: the business of making these advances on the American account, although chiefly confined to seven houses, is said to have involved acceptances to the amount of fifteen or sixteen millions sterling; while the actual capital in their possession to meet it was scarcely one-sixth of the whole.

That such a fictitious system should terminate in disaster, is not to be wondered at; and the catastrophe was likely to be accelerated by the reaction already beginning to take place from the simultaneous spirit of speculation and overtrading in England. A heavy drain on the bank for bullion set in last April; and, in consequence, she had raised the interest on her discounts above the market rate; a circumstance which compelled her to lend a portion of her funds to money dealers, who employed them in the discount of good bills: now it happened that the paper so purchased consisted in great part, of American bills drawn as has been described; and thus the bank directors became acquainted with the enormous amount of such engagements afloat in the market. They naturally felt alarm; and with a view to check the further progress of this system, gave the first check to its existence by sending instructions to the agent of their establishment at Liverpool, to reject the paper of certain American houses: from some indiscretion, this order became known; and a general discredit of the houses concerned took place: yet they still continued to carry on their operations; and it is said, that at the commencement of this year, the outstanding acceptances of three leading houses was estimated at no less a sum than £5,500,000. At length affairs came to a crisis; and about the beginning of March these three houses suspended their payments; thereby occasioning the utmost alarm in the commercial world: this, added to the other engagements of American houses, amounted to about twelve millions sterling. A failure to such an extent might have been irreparable; accordingly the bank considered it a public duty to come forward to their assistance: this was so far effectually done, that the three houses alluded to were enabled to continue their operations until they had greatly diminished the amount of their engagements: but a shock was given to the whole system of money transactions with America; which, combined with the difficulties arising from president Jackson's

measures, soon afterwards terminated in the stoppage of all public banks in the union, with an overthrow of credit in those republican states, from which they are not likely to recover during the existence of the present generation.

No part of the conduct of the whigs had been made a subject of severer attack than the system of their foreign policy; the ordinary defence of which was, that its result had been the preservation of peace; which is, or ought to be, the grand aim and object of Great Britain: and it is a circumstance that wonderfully simplifies our foreign policy, as far as British interests are concerned, that it is essentially pacific. Hence it was that our interference in the affairs of the Peninsula now became the subject of severe animadversion, as giving rise to feelings of a painful and conflicting nature, not admitting joy or sympathy in the success of British troops; many of which were engaged on both sides of the contest: and what made such a state of things still more distressing was the cruel and sanguinary character of the war, and the dreadful atrocities committed on each side. As might be expected, ministers were loudly blamed by persons who held very opposite opinions; some complaining, that they interfered in the war at all; others that they had not interfered in a more decided and efficient manner. They themselves maintained, that they had preserved throughout the strict line of non-intervention, without compromising the name and dignity of the British nation: but in one point all agreed, that hitherto their policy, whether wisely adopted or not, had been signally unfortunate in its results. On the tenth of March lord Mahon brought this whole subject under the consideration of the house, when the conduct of ministers was as vehemently impugned as it was ably defended. It was said that British influence in Spain was nearly destroyed by these measures; that the object of the quadruple alliance was to appease the civil dissensions in Portugal, not to sanction the intervention of England and France in Spain; that although some additional articles were agreed to in 1834, yet lord Palmerston had thought fit to proceed farther, and suspend the foreign enlistment act, allowing 12,000 Englishmen to enlist under the banners of the queen. Though lord Mahon professed that he was not actuated by any partiality for the character of Don Carlos, or any desire of advocating his claims on the Spanish crown, yet that bigoted tyrant found an ardent advocate in Mr. Grove Price, a gentleman of great attainments; but so imbued with high tory principles, and with a mind so saturated by the love of legitimacy, that he considered

the sufferings or destruction of a whole people as dust in the balance when opposed to the claims of a legitimate despot. 'Every feeling and sympathy of his heart,' he said, 'was mixed up in this cause, which he had taken up on purely disinterested motives, because he thought it a just one:' but he overlooked the important circumstance that the principle on which the queen founded her pretensions, had been three times sanctioned by the Cortes; who, with the king, were fully intitled to alter one of the absurd and antiquated laws of their country. The honorable gentleman concluded with a glowing encomium on the character of Don Carlos, though without making any attempt to contradict or justify the fact that he had issued the edict of Durango; and that, in virtue of the same, several English soldiers, when taken, had been executed. He declared that the prince, and his minister the bishop of Leon, were far from desiring to re-establish the inquisition: but in this he was contradicted by Mr. O'Connell, who was much better acquainted with the intentions of those dark conspirators against the happiness of the human race. Mr. Fector was an able coadjutor of Mr. Grove Price on his side of the question; of which Mr. Gally Knight took a very different view: he thought the struggle going on in the Peninsula, was not so much between Don Carlos and the queen, as between the principle of despotism and the principle of freedom. Lord Francis Egerton thought, that if, as stated by the last speaker, the inquisition was ranged on one side as the inevitable consequence of success, the wildest extravagances of atheism and jacobinism were ranged on the other—he wished to see an end of the contest—and though he gave the noble lord (Palmerston) credit for desiring to raise up the edifice of national liberty; yet taking the history and condition of Spain into consideration, he doubted the possibility of such a result. Lord Palmerston, in a very clear and effective speech, defended the policy of government. The title of queen Isabella was made by the will of one king: it was sanctioned by his successor, as well as by the Cortes expressly summoned for that purpose: it was also recognised by a great majority of the Spanish nation. This then was a question for Spain to decide, not for Great Britain. Our government had acknowledged Isabella queen *de facto*, just as the duke of Wellington's government had acknowledged Louis Philippe; though he was a king sprung from a revolution. His lordship took a cheering view of our foreign relations, and thought that Portugal was recovering from the struggle by which she had been convulsed, while

Spain would resume her former proud station among European nations. He eulogised the present Cortes; and denied that the Basque provinces were fighting for their privileges; since the great landowners, as well as the towns, were on the queen's side. He differed widely from lord Mahon in his construction of the quadruple treaty; and in thinking that a suspension of the foreign enlistment act was more disgraceful to our age than to the enlightened times of queen Elizabeth. He then vindicated our co-operation with France in this affair, when we rejected the offer made by that country of sending a large army into Spain, and limited her assistance to the prevention of intercourse between the countries by a cordon of troops on the other side of the Pyrenees. Lord Mahon had complained that our merchants had been treated with neglect and insult: but this remark was more applicable to the time when Ferdinand was on the throne: then indeed our commerce was seriously impeded, and our vessels piratically seized on, or confiscated, without hope of redress: at present our merchants had obtained important privileges, which he pointed out. A disputed succession, said his lordship, was a subject involving general interests: in this case England did not interfere for the purpose of forcing on the Spanish people a government which they themselves had not adopted: it was not that kind of interference which, it was feared, our government of 1830 was about to exercise in Belgium: Spain had often been connected with various countries: but the object was, that in future there should be neither an Austrian Spain, nor a French Spain, but a really Spanish Spain; and he concluded by powerfully contrasting the efforts of gentlemen opposite to maintain the cause of despotism in Europe, with the successful efforts of the present government in pursuit of a more liberal and enlightened system of policy. Sir Robert Peel rose after lord Palmerston, and stated, that he openly disavowed all participation in, or sympathy with, the cause of Don Carlos; for he wished to see Spain in the settled enjoyment of a free and enlightened government: but his belief was, that the course adopted by our ministers was defeating its professed objects, and obstructing the cause of improvement: it was calculated neither to raise our own character as a nation nor to gain the affections of the Spaniards. Lord Mahon did not on this occasion press any motion upon the house; declaring himself satisfied with the expression of opinion which had been elicited: but it was thought that in this discussion lord Palmerston had the best of the argument, and general sympathy

with the liberal cause of Spain, indulged in a hope of its success : but such a result seemed all at once to be farther off than ever ; as news arrived of the complete defeat of general Evans and the British legion at Hernani ; and the political opponents of government were not slow in seizing this opportunity of renewing discussion on the general principles of ministerial policy toward Spain. On the tenth of April sir Henry Hardinge, in an able speech, reviewed the question, and concluded with a motion for an address to the king, praying him not to renew the suspension of our foreign enlistment act, and not to employ his marine in the contest, except in that naval co-operation which he had engaged to afford, if necessary, under the stipulations of a treaty.

The motion was seconded by sir Stratford Canning ; who argued at considerable length against the notion that the terms of the quadruple treaty required such an interference as that which we had undertaken. Mr. Grove Price also supported the motion in his usual strain ; which elicited a burst of eloquence from Mr. Sheil : who, after arguing in defence of the construction put by government on the quadruple treaty, and entering into an apology for the present ill success of general Evans, observed in conclusion, that it had been asked—‘ whether it was befitting, that in Spain, the theatre of so many of their best exploits, British soldiers should give way before bands of mountain peasants ? ’ ‘ I feel,’ said the honorable gentleman, ‘ the force of that question ; but there is another which I venture to put to every man that hears me, and above all, to the gallant officer by whom the motion has been made. I invoke the same recollections ; I appeal to the same glorious remembrances ; and in the name of those scenes of which he was not only a witness but a sharer—I ask, whether it is befitting that in that land, consecrated in the annals of England’s glory, a terrible, remorseless, relentless despotism should be established ; and that the throne which England saved should be filled by a tyrant who has savagely and deliberately murdered her sons after the heat of battle was over ? Never ! The people of this country are averse, indeed, to wanton and unnecessary war ; but where the honor of England is at stake, there is no consequence which they are not prepared to meet ; no hazard which they will not be found prompt to encounter.’

On the third night of adjournment, Mr. Otway Cave, in reference to an application which had been made of the term ‘ mercenary ’ to general Evans and his companions in arms,

vindicated them from such an aspersion. Mr. Roebuck, after expressing his disbelief that a constitutional government could be established in any country by foreign interference, and designating ours, as a monstrous piece of patchwork, pertinently enough, and in rather a Demosthenian strain, observed—‘At all events, if we must interfere, let us fit out a British navy; let us send out by it a British army; and let that army land in Spain, and fight under the British flag.’ Such a plan would certainly have been the wisest; for now we were not suppressing but rather fomenting discord: and such a plan would have squared in some measure with the sentiments of sir William Follett; who having manifested indignation at the infamous cruelties exercised by both parties, expressed strongly ‘the interest which he felt in withdrawing a large body of Englishmen from the demoralising effects of a contest carried on with such a reciprocation of brutalities.’

At length lord Palmerston, after being repeatedly appealed to, arose, and in a speech clear in statement and close in reasoning, replied to the opponents of his policy; vindicated the British Legion; and after deprecating the atrocious acts of cruelty committed in Spain, asked—‘whether history did not tell us, that it was in the character of the Spanish people, to be more reckless of the spilling of blood than any other nation in Europe?’⁶ And was it for those who had seen the arms of England aided by the ruthless gerrillas, to urge this part of the Spanish character as a reason for refusing them our co-operation? He trusted that one of the first fruits of Spanish regeneration, through the means of a free constitution, would be the creation of a public opinion tending to correct these faults in the national character.’ His lordship then entered into a detail, and a vindication of the celebrated quadruple treaty; and concluded by observing, ‘that however skilfully the question before them might be disguised, it involved nothing less than the alternative whether England should continue to fulfil her engagement with the queen of Spain, or disgracefully abandon an ally whom she had pledged herself to succor. This however, he said, was far short of the real tendency of the motion: the contest in Spain was but a portion of that great conflict now going on throughout the world: the house had to decide that night between two opposite systems of foreign policy; and even

⁶ Surely this was a strong argument either for leaving them alone to play at this game; or for adopting Mr. Roebuck’s suggestion of putting down such atrocities with a strong hand.

these were not isolated principles, which might be taken or rejected by themselves; they were intimately connected with, and deeply affected, all our domestic interests; for the object of one party was, to support Carlos and despotism; of the other, to uphold Isabella and the constitution. In the days of the reformation, when religion divided the different powers of Europe, despotic sovereigns and free states were seen united to defend the cause of religious liberty: in the present day things were reversed in this respect; and we now saw men of the most opposite opinions on religious subjects united to retard the progress of political improvement: the opinion which that house was about to pronounce would, in fact, decide not only between conflicting opinions in England, but between antagonist principles, struggling for ascendancy, in every other part of Europe.

This appeal to the principles and predilections of the movement party, had its effect; and the secretary sat down amid loud and enthusiastic cheering. Sir Robert Peel rose in reply, but found it difficult to advance anything new on so exhausted a topic; and the discussion was closed by lord John Russell, who defended the existing state of our foreign relations, principally by contrasting it with that left by the honorable baronet and his friends when they quitted office in 1830. The original motion, which had been for going into a committee of supply, was, on a division, carried by 278 against 242; so that sir Henry Hardinge's amendment was rejected by a majority of 36. This same subject was brought before the house of lords two days afterwards by lord Alvanley, in a motion for the dispatches of lord John Hay, our commander on the coast, relative to the affair of Hernani: but of course little novelty could be expected in debate. Early in June general Evans resigned his command of the British Legion; and the dissolution of that body, which was denied its arrears of pay, sent home thousands of squalid and emaciated wretches, living, or rather dying, witnesses of Spanish ingratitude, to crowd our public offices, and implore the assistance of our authorities to urge their claims on the court which they had so gallantly served: but they found that it is not the fashion of government to take up such a cause as this, however they may have previously sanctioned it. So also Messrs. Bell, the merchants, found this to their cost, when they sent a vessel called the *Vixen*, laden with goods, to the coast of Circassia, which Russia had placed in a state of blockade, without sufficient authority, and without notifying

the same to our government. This vessel was seized; no redress could be obtained; and the British minister, after a slight negotiation, declined to press any demand upon the Russian government. Another instance of our truckling to Russia appeared, when lord Dudley Stuart took occasion to inquire of lord Palmerston whether a promise made by him to appoint a British consul at Cracow had been fulfilled. The noble secretary at once admitted that it had been his intention to send such an agent to the Polish state; but he had since been induced to depart from his purpose, finding that greater difficulties would attend it than he at first anticipated. On the eighth of March, Mr. Barlow Hay moved for copies of the correspondence between our government and those of Mexico and the United States with regard to efforts making by the province of Texas to establish its independence; stating at the same time his opinion of its extreme importance, and the suspicions he entertained of the ambitious projects of the American government in this respect.

In reply, lord Palmerston observed, that he fully admitted the importance of the subject and its claim on our anxious attention: but he strongly disclaimed any doubt of the honorable intentions of the American government in respect of Texas! whose language to congress was most consistent with good faith, and with the most scrupulous honor and delicacy towards other powers; though it was true that some of the adjoining states had interfered in favor of the insurgent faction in that province; and a suspicion prevailed that they had interested motives for interference: the president, however, had required that they should not only suspend their recognition of its independence until this should be demonstratively accomplished, but should wait till other powers, against whom no such suspicions could be entertained, had set them an example.

Mr. Hay had dwelt on the extension of slavery to the province of Texas, as a consequence to be feared from its incorporation with the United States. Lord Palmerston admitted that such an effect might take place, and declared that he regarded it with extreme jealousy; but he saw good reason to think that, on the same ground, the northern states of the union would equally object to the incorporation of Texas.⁷ Under such circumstances the foreign secretary

⁷ If his lordship was sincere in his expressions, he was singularly blind to the designs of American statesmen. We have lived to see

considered it his duty to resist the production of papers: in fact, we had lately truckled to an autocrat; and it was now our turn to truckle to democrats: Mr. Hay, however, was not so satisfied with his lordship's declarations, as to be induced to withdraw his motion; but he lost it, on a division, by 41 votes against 28.

Our colonial history, this year, presents but little matter for history, beyond that which has been already alluded to in the account of parliamentary proceedings. In Upper Canada complete confidence had been re-established between its governor and the legislature; and when sir F. Head, on the fourth of March, prorogued his parliament, he noticed the happy results which had been secured by their firmness, loyalty, and public spirit. During the session, 109 bills (chiefly relating to great public works) had received the assent of the governor; and in anticipation of the demand for work thence to be expected, sir Francis wrote to the poor-law commissioners at home, requesting a large supply of laborers and artisans.

In Lower Canada parliament did not assemble until after the period which closes this history; but every day manifested signs of that insurrection which soon took place, instigated as it was by demagogues both in the provincial and the imperial parliament; by a defective estimate of the spirit of the British people; by a false comparison between their resources and political wisdom, at this time, and at the outbreak of the American revolution; as well as by exaggerated hopes of assistance from democratic sympathy on the other side of the St. Lawrence. Dissatisfaction existed between the executive and legislative powers in New Brunswick and Newfoundland, but wise measures and an improved system of government prevented any outbreak. In Jamaica, the government of sir Lionel Smith gave great satisfaction; and the system of apprenticeship among the slaves worked quietly and well. In our eastern possessions nothing worthy of particular record took place; but a degree of painful interest began to be excited by the reports from New South Wales. In a census taken at the end of last year it appeared, that the

the machinations of the American government carried out in the actual incorporation of Texas. Granting that his lordship had reason to eulogise the president and congress of 1837, on their principles of honor and delicacy, what must be thought of the difficulties of treating with a government which changes its principles as often as it changes its president!

British population there amounted to 77,096; of which 27,831 were prisoners: the number of free males above the age of twelve was 23,121; while that of free females past the same age, amounted to no more than 11,973; the Roman catholics numbered 21,898. This fertile colony, full of resources, and possessing an admirable climate, governed on enlightened principles, and furnished with religious institutions, presented moral features of a very alarming nature: for instead of a free and simple peasantry, respectable artisans, and upright citizens, scarcely anything was to be seen but the dregs of prisons; some still in a convict state; others indulged with a revocable freedom; and many arrived at incredible opulence, yet branded with the stigma of their original conviction. Such a state of disorganisation threatened posterity with so strange a combination of moral and political disorder, that the attention of statesmen was drawn more closely to the investigation and remedy of this evil.

In France nothing occurred affecting our political relations with that country, still occupied with its trials of political offenders; but which were relieved on the thirtieth of May by the auspicious nuptials of the duke of Orleans with the princess Helena: an union which promised unusual happiness to the French people; but which Providence in its mysterious counsels has since thought fit to dissolve, by removing from this sphere of action a prince who bade fair to rival the best monarch that ever occupied the throne of St. Louis.

The military affairs of Spain have already occupied our attention in parliamentary proceedings; but the war now began to assume a new feature, in military insurrections and the murder of generals by their soldiers: in truth no contest in ancient or modern history exhibits such scenes of atrocity. In the midst, however, of these sanguinary horrors, the Cortes brought to an end their projected scheme of a new constitution, to which the queen-regent and her daughter solemnly swore fidelity, on the eighteenth of June: the summer however did not pass over without one of those acts of legislative injustice which tend to destroy any constitutional fabric, by the powerful indignation which they excite against oppressors. A bill was passed for the general suppression and confiscation of the lands of all convents, monasteries, and other religious houses, within the peninsula, the adjacent islands, and African possessions: and this was followed by another which abolished the payment of tithes. The successes, how-

ever, of Don Carlos, who advanced up to the very gates of Madrid, bade fair to nip this constitution in the bud ; but the celebrated Espartero was called to the defence of the capital, and the Carlists were soon seen in retreat.

In Portugal, a ministry which the revolution of last year had placed at the head of affairs, and which depended on the most exaggerated notions of the people's supremacy, soon found those notions incompatible with any national administration of government ; and the hostility of the clubs and national guards, was provoked by what was considered a dereliction of principles. In the beginning of January rumors of an intended insurrection excited much anxiety, and ministers still increased their unpopularity with the democratic party, by recalling a large body of troops from Alemtejo to the capital. The Cortes were to meet on the eighteenth, the day assigned for the expected movement, when the admiral commanding the British ships in the Tagus, gave intimation to our consul that he had made arrangements for the protection of British residents ; and for the security of the merchant ships in harbor. At this time the animosity of the Portuguese against their ancient friends and allies increased daily ; the ambition and selfishness of Great Britain were incessantly attacked by the popular press ; and a tariff of custom-house duties formed on the rudest principles of restriction, almost amounting to prohibition upon imports of manufactured articles, seemed levelled against our commerce : the eighteenth of January however passed off quietly ; but so inimical to our countrymen was the popular mind, that the British admiral thought it necessary to issue a general order that ' on account of the difficult position in which the queen and her royal consort were placed, and the great suspicion with which foreigners in their service were viewed, the utmost caution should be observed by Englishmen residing in Portugal with regard to private interviews with royalty ; in order that neither the government nor the people might have any pretext for undue impressions regarding the intentions of England.' In the mean time lord Howard de Walden, our ambassador, continued his exertions, but in vain, to obtain justice for the officers and soldiers who had been in Don Pedro's service ; and whose claims on the Portuguese government remained unliquidated. All this may perhaps be considered as base ingratitude ; but when we consider the little interest our government took in the welfare of the two peninsular kingdoms, at the end of the French war, and how recklessly we delivered them over to their bigoted and tyrannical

rulers, we can hardly be surprised at the revolution of sentiment against us which now exhibited itself among their people. The Portuguese ministry surrendered up the reins of government, after a defeat on the navy estimates, in May; when the Cortes threw such difficulties in the way of forming another, that the queen was obliged to tax her womanly ingenuity in overcoming them: this she effected by a very simple expedient: communicating to the Cortes the embarrassment of her situation, she submissively desired them to appoint a ministry themselves; since she was not permitted to form one: and this frank declaration had its desired effect on the assembly, which was at once flattered and propitiated by her request; assuring her majesty that nothing could be farther from their thoughts than such an invasion of her prerogative. Accordingly the ministry of M. Dias de Oliviera was installed; and no long time afterwards, the pregnancy of the queen being announced, diffused great joy over the country in the prospect of an heir to this ancient throne.

The Austrian dominions maintained their usual tranquillity, with the exception of some manifestation of an independent spirit of reform in Hungary. At the end of last year a resolution of the Germanic diet appeared, manifesting the preponderance of the three great powers, by which the whole confederation bound itself to deliver up political offenders to the state injured or attacked. The protection of the three great powers continued, as heretofore, to be extended to the republic of Cracow; the senate of which was moulded according to the peremptory demands of their residents. Nothing worthy of remark occurred in Belgium and the Netherlands, except that a treaty of commerce was this year negotiated between the latter country and Great Britain at the Hague; the provisions of which placed the two nations on a reciprocal footing, and accorded to each all privileges enjoyed by the most favored people.

Affairs in the cantons of Switzerland were much less satisfactory; the spirit both of religious and political animosity being in full activity within most of the states; while the federal constitution which united these independent commonwealths was found to fall short of its object; neither affording a guarantee to public order, nor securing to Switzerland a desirable position among the other European powers. Early in the spring an insurrectionary movement of the aristocratic faction disturbed the canton of Berne, where a large party, dissatisfied with the constitution of 1831, was constantly framing

machinations for the restoration of their old system: a revolution was meditated, but was put down by the activity of the cantonal government.

Many of the principal cities of Italy and Sicily were severely visited by the cholera this year; and in Palermo at one period the deaths were not reckoned at much less than 1000 daily: both in Calabria and Sicily, the ignorant multitude gave credence to the most absurd fictions regarding this frightful malady; which raged the more violently, as the medical men were said to have abandoned their duties with disgraceful precipitancy. Differences existed between the king of Sweden and his Norwegian subjects, whose democratic institutions and national peculiarities, as well as their recollections of 1814, threw many difficulties in the way of their incorporation with Sweden; though these were ultimately smoothed down and overcome by the prudent and paternal conduct of its excellent monarch. The newly established kingdom of Greece might have advanced toward her proper place among the civilized nations of Europe, and might have soon fulfilled her destiny, notwithstanding the obesity of her boy-king as well as the turbulent nature of her population and native chiefs, had not the ambition of Russia, and the vile intrigues of France, interfered to undo the work which both countries had co-operated to establish: but Athens was selected as a convenient spot for an anti-British party in the East. Russia afforded materials for the historian only as far as her foreign relations were concerned: in these, however, she exhibited as invariable a policy, as she exerts an unremitting activity. Russia never effects by violence that which can be brought about by any art; and from the first she has been less indebted to her arms for success than to her diplomatic subtlety, taking advantage of every crisis in public affairs, and pursuing her schemes of aggrandisement, relying less on the resources of her own strength, great as they are, than on the fears and forbearance of other powers; and thus she has in little more than half a century nearly doubled her European dominions; not only advancing her frontier in the old direction of Poland and Constantinople, but even daring to feel her way towards our Indian possessions: the progress however of this ambitious power has been lately checked in a quarter where she least expected it. By an article in the treaty of Adrianople the sultan had yielded to his conquerors that part of Circassia which was in the occupation of their troops at the end of the war: the cession was of vast importance in the eyes of the Russian autocrat—but the in-

habitants, noted for their bravery and love of independence, and acknowledging only a sort of feudal superiority in the Ottoman empire, denied this right of transfer, and contended that the Porte, in withdrawing its protection, had forfeited every claim to their allegiance: in particular they resisted the dominion of Russia, with which nation Circassia had long been at war. 'Who has power at all,' they said, 'to give us away? Our allegiance is offered to the sultan; but if he be at peace with Russia, he cannot accept it; for Circassia is at war: our allegiance is a free offering; he cannot sell, because he has not bought it.' The principles, however, of natural right and equity have little influence with an ambitious despot, bent on advancing his unwieldy power: accordingly Russia has been occupied for several years in her endeavors to subjugate these gallant barbarians, noted among the Caucasian tribes for their bravery, intelligence, and personal beauty. She has possessed herself of Anapa and several other important posts in the country; but these are insulated positions, and obliged to draw their supplies from the Crimea, though in the midst of a most fertile region: for the Circassians, without fearing the advance of troops, or listening to proclamations dictated in terms such as Napoleon would have used, have hitherto disputed every step of their invaders with indomitable courage, overwhelming them by thousands in mountain passes, and sometimes storming forts and putting their defenders to the sword. But although Russia seems to be gaining little at present in these campaigns, it is doubtful whether the Circassians can eventually hold out against their foes, unless some diversion be made in their favor; or at least unless they can be supplied with the munitions of war, of which they stand greatly in need, and which from their isolated position they find it difficult to obtain. To preclude the possibility of their obtaining such aid is the aim of Russia; and hence the capture of the British schooner, the *Vixen*, at the end of last year, which now occasioned much discussion in our parliament.

This ship, with a cargo of salt, having been for some time off different parts of the Circassian coasts, so as to engage the notice of the Russians, came to anchor in the bay of Soudjoukali, which was no longer in the occupation of their armies: having there opened a communication with the shore, she was soon taken by a Russian brig of war, conveyed to Sebastopol, and condemned as a lawful prize, on the grounds of having violated the sanitary and custom-house laws: it was farther pretended that she had, before her seizure, landed gunpowder

and other warlike stores. In answer to the charge of contraband trading and violation of quarantine, the owners repudiated all authority of the Russians on that coast to make such regulations; contending that the Circassians were a free people; and the accusation respecting the gunpowder they utterly denied. Appeal was made to our government, but in vain: the British government, like some of its nearest neighbors, is ready enough to avenge the cause of its subjects on any small and impotent realm, but cautiously shuns every vindication of private rights with a powerful nation; and in the present instance it implicitly admitted the legality of the seizure by finally desisting from all claims of relief.

Turkey, generally the scene where European diplomatists exert their skill and tact, demands but little notice, though the Divan was deeply engaged in negotiations with the pacha of Egypt on the one side, and with England, Austria, and Prussia on the other: but the result of its labors did not yet appear. The sultan Mahmoud, however, continued to pursue his reforming career, and this year instituted a medical school, against a strong opposition from the Ulemahs; who were vehemently averse to the study of practical anatomy by Musselmans; and whose prejudices could not be subdued except by a proviso, that no bodies but those of Christians and Jews should be subjected to the operation of the dissecting knife. Another important and equitable measure was the institution of a council of appeal in commercial matters between Turks and Franks, composed of an equal number of each corporation, whose decision should be based on the principles established by the best commercial codes of law.

The circumstances of the American United States this year were such as to give satisfaction neither to friends nor foes: the former saw with great alarm the effect which president Jackson's celebrated circular⁸ was producing among states where the mania for speculation had been encouraged by a facility of obtaining paper money from the public banks; while the latter viewed with strong feelings of jealousy, the deliberations and determinations of congress with regard to Mexico, and her revolted province of Texas;—the irritating and unreasonable claims made against the former in her distress, and the appointment of an envoy to the latter, in the event of its independence

⁸ By which the receivers in the western and south-western states were directed to accept no payment for the sale of public lands, except in specie, or notes convertible into specie on demand.

being declared. One of the last acts of the president was the appointment of an individual to this contingent office;⁹ though the Mexican government did not fail to employ what were its only means of resistance to such injustice, in a spirited protest by their minister for foreign affairs, Don José Ortiz: this however had no effect on the republicans, who, in the whole affair, and as the event has shown, appear to have taken a leaf out of Russian diplomacy.

With regard to Mexico herself, as well as the other states of South America, she and they were suffering all those miseries and losses which nations smarting under the rod of despotism are sure to suffer, when, after the acquisition of independence, they rush madly into the opposite evil of republicanism; laying themselves open to the ambitious projects of desperate and remorseless adventurers. To detail these calamities would require a separate and very lengthy volume: we must, therefore, leave them, and return to a brief consideration of our own parliamentary affairs, when the session was approaching that period which is usually assigned for its close.

In the month of June, scarcely one of the important measures, recommended in his majesty's speech at the opening of parliament, had been brought to a conclusion: nor did any prospect appear of such a consummation before its prorogation, on account of the mutual obstruction of the prevailing parties in either house: hence it became a question, how long ministers would consent to remain responsible for the conduct of public affairs. Indeed, rumours of their intended resignation had

⁹ This determination was consequent on a report made by a committee, and presented to congress on the twenty-fourth of February. Its first declaration was—'that the independence of Texas ought to be recognised;' its second, 'that the committee of ways and means should be instructed to provide, in the bill for the civil and diplomatic expenses, a salary and outfit for such public agent as the president may determine to send to Texas.' The following are the observations made in the Annual Register for 1837 (p. 365) on this transaction:—'It is due to this committee to state, that they had not the front to preface these resolutions with any preamble or statement of reasons. When we remember, that Texas had been wrested from Mexico by a free-booting horde of *'citizens'* of the United States; that the *'government,'* the president, the commander of the troops in that province are Anglo-American, and that nothing but the aid of Kentucky, and other wild western adventurers, prevented Texas from relapsing into possession of the Mexican government; it must be admitted that the mode in which this republican committee on foreign relations, would administer inter-national equity, presents no model for our imitation.'

been prevalent before the Easter recess ; and at the opening of this session, lord John Russell had unequivocally intimated the resolution of the cabinet to make their continuation in office dependent on measures which they considered necessary for the peace and settlement of Ireland. It was now evident that no menaces would produce any effect on the house of lords regarding those measures ; and there were not wanting persons to reproach ministers, and urge them on to redeem their pledge : this, however, they did not seem inclined to do ; though their opponents evinced no want of readiness to occupy their places, whenever they should be vacated.

Such a state of embarrassment in public affairs called forth the skill and patriotism of Mr. Roebuck in his endeavors to unravel and clear them. On the ninth of June, to which period the second reading of the Irish municipal corporation bill, and the Irish tithe bill, had been deferred in both houses, when the order of the day was moved in the commons, the member for Bath moved an amendment, ' that the house should resolve itself into a committee for considering the state of this nation.' He observed on the extraordinary position in which the representatives of the people were placed : two bills had been sent to the upper house ; but they were told, that the peers would not take them into consideration until something had been done by the lower house to please them. There was, in fact, no government in the country ; and ministers were no longer in the same position as at the beginning of the session. They stated then, that they would stake their places on the fate of the Irish corporation bill ; what had become of that bill ? It was laid on the shelf, till the lords knew what the lower house intended to do ; virtually saying, ' if you do not what pleases us, we will not pass your bill.' But obstructions and delay were not confined to the lords : every proposition brought forward for removing the evil had been distinctly opposed by government. What good, then, he would ask, could be obtained by the farce of discussing an Irish tithe bill ? Did they not know, that, if it passed that house, defeat awaited it elsewhere ? Ministers, in short, were useless for good purposes ; and, as far as the people were concerned, they were mischievous. When the reform act was passed, the unrepresented classes consented to forego their claim to the franchise on the solemn assurance of the reforms to be effected by the measure in all departments of the state : great reductions in the public expenditure ; great improvements in every branch of the law, were promised : justice to Ireland was

pledged : effectual means for educating the people were to be taken, as also for a general extension of the parliamentary suffrage ; while we were told that the government of corruption and tory domination was to be consigned to everlasting destruction.

‘The hopes then raised,’ continued the honorable member, ‘have been miserably disappointed ;—the promises shamefully broken. There has been no reduction of public expenditure ; no reform in the disgraceful administration of our laws : the education of our people has been left to chance ; and so far are the days of toryism from being numbered, that the other night our liberal government was beaten in the people’s house on the important measure of poor-rates : to sum up all, it is now evident that the present government is doomed : and its termination is but a question of short time.’

We might here remark on the usual inconsistency of the radical party, which would make ministers intirely responsible for that numerical weakness which directly results from their want of more efficient popular support : but we prefer the confining ourselves to a detailed account of this speech ; whence a fair estimate of the views of that party may be usefully drawn. The honorable member proceeded to give his own explanation of the causes of embarrassment, and to describe its remedies. ‘He would assume, for the purpose of argument, that ministers were honest in their intentions, and desirous to obtain for the people all legitimate fruits of the reform bill : but there existed two difficulties in their path ;—first, the house of lords, bitterly hostile to popular demands ; and secondly, an imperfect representation of the people in the house of commons : now two ways lay open to ministers—either they might hope to win over their opponents by compromise, and thus disarm opposition ; or they might pursue a bold determined course, which would force their enemies, who also were the people’s enemies, to yield.’

In the description of this bold and determined course, the honorable member gave a fair specimen of his opinions. With respect to the government of Ireland, for instance, ‘in which they had suffered their enemies to trample on their measures ; delaying, changing, or contemptuously rejecting them, as the humor of their insolence suggested, while the promoters bowed themselves in the dust, and supplicated their foes to be moderate in their supremacy—what course, he asked, ought to have been pursued, instead of this crawling subserviency ? One which they did not dare to follow. They should have

raised on high the banner of freedom for England and Ireland : they should have boldly told the people of both countries, that justice could be obtained for neither, whilst an irresponsible body of hereditary legislators disposed at will of the fortunes and happiness of the people. That people looked on ; they were beginning to grow angry with this hereditary band : a word from ministers ; a hand lifted up by the government, would have created a feeling which the peers could not have withstood. But their hereditary privileges and their order would have suffered : be it so : it is then plain that you love those exclusive privileges more than you love the good government of the people : let the world know this—be honest in the matter ; and do not pretend to be liberals with such feelings predominant in your minds.’

Thus it appeared that the crime for which ministry drew down on themselves these and similar attacks, was, that their political opinions did not exactly square with those of Mr. Roebuck and his party ; in short that whigs would not consent to become democrats : but to proceed with this diatribe on this occasion—‘ The dissenters petitioned for relief from an unjust impost ; and ministers had declared themselves friends to the dissenters and to religious liberty : but how do they show themselves such ? Do they come down to the house, and openly avow the doctrines on which alone these imposts ought to be abolished ? No ! they tell all who maintain the supremacy of the church of England, that they themselves are friends of the church, and enemies of the voluntary system : thus far they hold up the doctrines of religious tyranny ; but, on the other hand, they bring forward a measure, the tendency of which is to support the voluntary principle ; and which can only be properly supported by an appeal to it ; so far they are the friends of religious liberty : but the consequence of this proceeding has been defeat—ignominious defeat within doors ; and disgust out of doors.’

Mr. Roebuck then dwelt, in a similar strain, on the conduct of ministers regarding the question of the ballot, and declared that the people were naturally disheartened when led by such men, whose principles they could not understand, and whose honesty in consequence they began seriously to doubt. ‘ The people,’ he observed, ‘ to save themselves from the inroads of a plundering faction must be ever alert, in a state bordering on revolution : now a wise ministry would endeavor to remedy this evil by one great effort ; and having an enthusiastic people to back them, would so alter our legislative constitution, as to

render a wise administration as certain in a calm, as in an excited state of the people: show them but a prize worthy of attainment, and you will quickly have at your command a force to overcome any opposition.'

But whatever were the faults of ministers in rejecting Mr. Roebuck's counsels, and neglecting his intricate and dangerous remedies, it would seem that the country would not have to suffer much longer from their mismanagement. On this occasion the honorable member undertook to predict that within a few weeks they would cease to hold the reins of government—that is, if the people remained in their present apathetic condition. 'The public,' said he, 'feel, that little or no difference results to them from a so-called liberal, or from a tory administration: this house, therefore, unchecked and unimpelled from without, follows the natural bent of its inclination to the tory side of politics: every day increases the popular indifference, and therefore strengthens our adversaries: in a few weeks their *minority* of five will have swollen to a *majority*; and then their hopes which shine in the eager eyes of gentlemen opposite will be fulfilled; for they will be restored to the cares and emoluments of office.'

Still this approaching consummation, might (according to Mr. Roebuck) yet be prevented—that is, if ministers would take his advice, and turn from whigs to radicals. Concluding with his old topic of the necessity existing to create an enthusiasm among the people, he declared that this never would be done by that class of politicians who are always afraid of going too far. 'All great reforms,' he said, 'have been, and, while our legislature remains in its present faulty state, must be, effected by the unrepresented. By them the reform act was gained; and so will be every measure of justice for Ireland. Create enthusiasm among them, and it spreads to the constituencies: allow apathy or indifference to prevail, and a feeling of caste arises in the constituent bodies, which become careless of liberal doctrines; toryism gradually regains the ascendant, and dishonest reformers keep up a constant clamor about our going too far. At any rate thus much is certain—ministers cannot go back; and if they stand still they are ruined: their only chance of success is to go forward. If they will heartily and cordially co-operate with the radical party, they may again have the support of an enthusiastic people, retain their present position and run a brilliant, useful career,'—by the destruction of our constitution; the honorable gentleman might have added.

His charges, however, met with as much support from the house as they deserved. Colonel Thompson, who seconded his motion, stood almost its only supporter; so that in urging their common complaint the gallant colonel pleasantly observed, that if he were speaking in the Greek language, he should use the dual number, as more accurately expressing the strength of their party. He added but few objections to those of Mr. Roebuck against ministers; 'who had started,' he said, 'with a large stock of popular energy in their favor: but in their fear of the boiler bursting, had allowed the fire to go out: like Spanish generals, they had one eye in their own camp, and the other in their enemy's; all their efforts for success being paralysed by the fear of being too successful.' The honorable member appeared accurately to have estimated the numerical strength of his party in the house; for even Mr. O'Connell protested against this blame cast on his majesty's ministers, who had gained the affections, and had the confidence of the people; while Dr. Lushington vindicated them from the charge of disappointing the expectations of dissenters; and even Mr. Hume, though he thought they had not done all they might have effected, standing on the great principles of reform, yet took into favorable consideration the opposition which they had met with in a course which he could not think so clear and easy as Mr. Roebuck had described it. 'He could not shut his eyes to the fact, that there were 300 individuals in that house opposed to his majesty's government: as for the tories, the country would not bear them in administration: nor could he see any good in bringing them back to temporary power: the best way of dealing with the house of lords was to bombard it with good measures.' After such a defence by a portion of the radical party, it was thought that ministers might have safely let the question drop here: but lord John Russell entered into a vindication of himself and his colleagues from the charges of Mr. Roebuck; with whom he disclaimed any community of sentiment in the views that gentleman had broached in reference to the constitution either of church or state. 'He was decidedly opposed to the voluntary system; and he thought the people of the country were, like himself, still attached to the established church: as much also¹ was he averse to an abolition of the house of peers, so loudly called for by the member for Bath. As for his doctrine that men of moderation and compromise never succeed in establishing anything good or useful, he decidedly thought, that to the moderation, and

mediation between violent or extreme opinions on both sides, which had been exercised by lord Somers and the great whig leaders at our revolution, the country was indebted for all its subsequent prosperity.'

Mr. Roebuck's motion was, of course, negatived without a division. The opposition took no part in the discussion, as they could not have supported the motion on the grounds urged by the member for Bath; while the great body of radicals, though much alienated from the present administration, were not anxious to replace it by a tory cabinet. It was apparent that between these extremes of opposition the whigs might continue indefinitely to retain their places, if they could overcome the painful humiliation of such a position; but it was a prevalent opinion that under such circumstances they would not long consent to conduct the affairs of government.

One alternative, however, remained as a termination of their difficulties, in the dissolution of parliament; for the present house of commons had been elected in the short interval of sir Robert Peel's administration; a circumstance which naturally tended to the success of many tory candidates: nor is it improbable that ministers would have resorted to this measure, had it not been known that the king was strongly opposed to it; and in the present relative state of parties they had no means of changing his resolution; especially as they were well aware that a proffer of resignation would have been eagerly accepted.

This obstacle, however, seemed as it would not long stand in their way. Symptoms of decline in his majesty's health began to show themselves early in the spring, and increased so rapidly, that on the eighteenth of May he was prevented from holding a drawing-room at St. James's which had been appointed for that day. From this time his majesty's debility went on increasing till the beginning of June, when it caused serious alarm to his family, though he still continued at intervals to give audiences to ministers, and foreign envoys.

From the king's constant attention to religious duties, and the comfort he felt from their performance, it will create no surprise that he readily assented to the queen's suggestion that he should receive the Sacrament from the hands of the archbishop of Canterbury: accordingly Sunday the eighteenth was fixed on for the administration of that holy rite, the acceptance of which, and the public attestation thus shown of his fervent attachment to that church in whose keeping so precious a gift has been deposited, was a source of great and

manifest consolation to the afflicted monarch. It happened now to be the anniversary of the battle of Waterloo; and his majesty expressed an anxious desire to Dr. Chambers of living over so memorable a day: nor did he forget to send a kind message to the duke of Wellington, requesting that he would not, on his majesty's account, neglect to give his annual dinner to the officers engaged in that glorious action; a celebration of the event which king William, since his accession, had honored by his presence. Several times during the archbishop's sojourn at the castle he read the Liturgy of our church to his expiring sovereign, who declared that 'it was the greatest blessing of God to hear from his lips that beautiful service.' Though his majesty passed the night tolerably tranquil, yet decaying nature could no longer be recruited by the ordinary sources of strength and sustenance; during the nineteenth he continued to grow weaker and weaker; and as night advanced, a more rapid diminution of the vital powers was perceptible: about half-past ten he was seized with a fainting fit, from which he only imperfectly revived: he was then removed to his bed, and at twelve minutes past two o'clock on Tuesday morning departed without a struggle; the queen kneeling by his side and affectionately holding the hand of him, to whom she had been a source of consolation both in life and death.

'Thus,' says the document whence several of these details are taken, 'expired in the seventy-third year of his age, in firm reliance on the merits of his Redeemer, king William IV.; a just and upright monarch, a forgiving enemy, a sincere friend, and an indulgent master;' leaving, with his youthful heiress, an experiment to be tried—how far, in this age of acknowledged civilisation, an amiable and accomplished female on the throne, carefully brought up in the cultivation of her moral, religious, and social duties, can exalt the spirit of loyalty, assuage the vehemence of contending parties, and rally Britons round the altar of that constitution which is the glory of their own nation and the envy of the world. I will not presume to anticipate the verdict of posterity on this interesting subject; but will conclude by observing, that on the twentieth of June her present gracious majesty was proclaimed queen of Great Britain and Ireland; and may God long preserve her in health, happiness, and prosperity upon the island throne of her ancestors.

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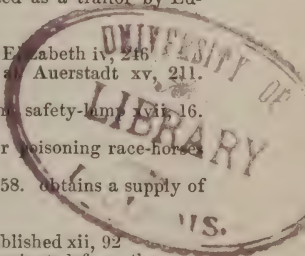
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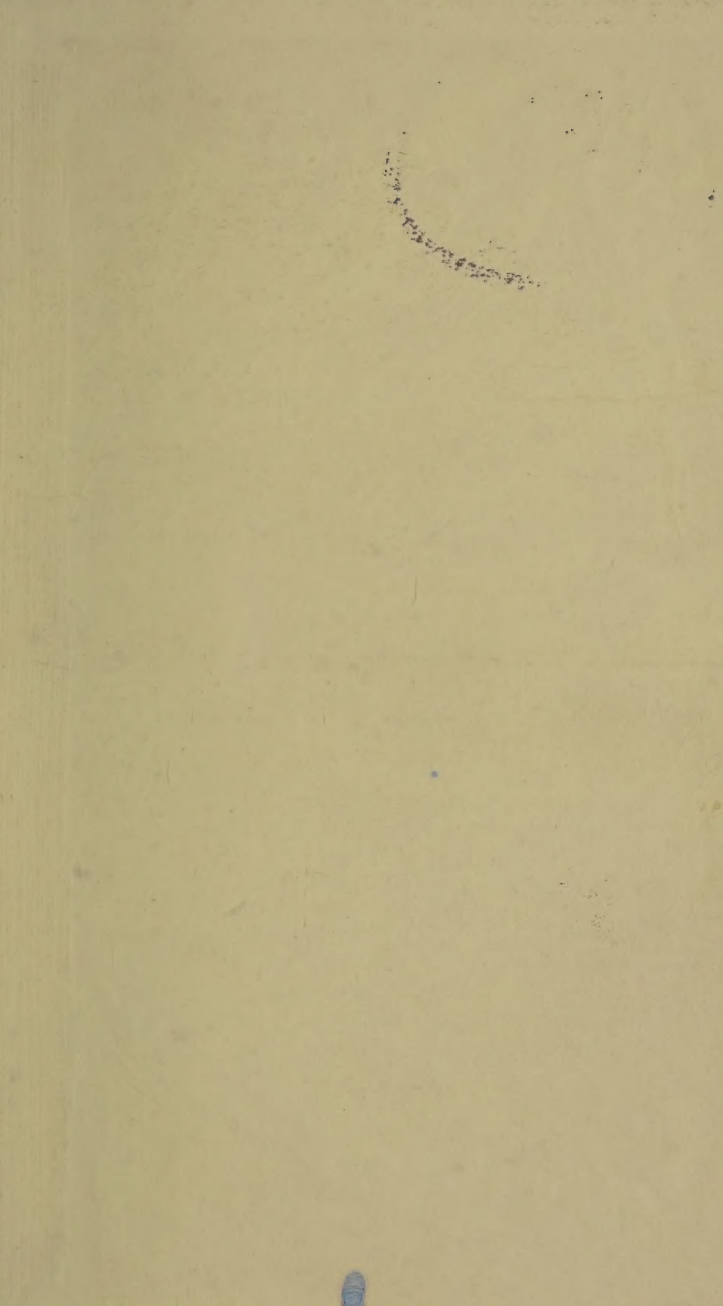
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